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ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS



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CHINESE COOLIES IN THE RED RIVER DELTA

ASIA'S
TEEMING MILLIONS :
AND ITS PROBLEMS FOR THE WEST

by
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CONTENTS

FOREWORD	p. 11
----------	-------

INTRODUCTION

The aftermath of War – Material prosperity of United States – Man-power of the East – Teeming millions – Clash of civilizations – Unconsciousness of power – The bar to emigrants.	p. 15
--	-------

PART I

OVER-POPULATION IN JAPAN

CHAPTER I. OVERCROWDING AND UNREST

Intense interest in the problem throughout Japan – Birth rates – Food supplies – Rural discontent – Smallness of holdings – Rise in farm rentals – Class struggles in the countryside – Insecurity of labour – Middle class unemployment – Modern literature	p. 37
--	-------

CHAPTER II. THE REMEDIES FOR OVER-POPULATION

The Japanese dislike of emigration – Bitter resentment of American Emigration Acts – Government encourages emigration – Birth Control – Economic remedies: agricultural development – Neglect of pasture lands – Industrialization – Scarcity of raw materials	p. 60
--	-------

PART II

THE EXPANSION OF CHINA

CHAPTER III. THE CHINAMAN ABROAD

Vast numbers of Chinese emigrants – Overcrowded and desolate territories – Government attitude towards emigrants – Types of emigrants	p. 91
---	-------

CONTENTS

CHAPTER IV. THE CHINESE AND JAPANESE IN MANCHURIA

Early history of Manchuria – Its government – Clashing of two over-populated countries – Extent of Japanese trade – Food exports – The land of the soy bean – Mineral wealth and railways p. 103

CHAPTER V. AN EMIGRATION OF TRADERS: THE CHINESE IN FRENCH INDO-CHINA

Chinese influence in Indo-China – Uniform type of emigrants – Chinese monopolies – Trade and housing – The Annamites – Artful 'Uncle' – The Chinese and the rice trade – The Congregations – Money and amusements – Chinese complaints of ill-treatment – Decline of their trade predominance – Political dangers p. 130

CHAPTER VI. THE CHINESE IN BRITISH MALAY STATES: ENTERPRISE AND PROGRESS

Early Chinese immigration to British Malaya – Chinese enterprise and success; their interests protected – Chinese development of rubber and tin – Methods of working in the mines – Chinese prosperity p. 161

PART III

INDIAN EMIGRATION

CHAPTER VII. INDIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS EMIGRATION

Indian resentment of colour bar – Indentured and other early emigration – Government regulations – Assisted and voluntary emigration – Moslem traders – Dominions' measures to exclude them – Union of Indians in protest p. 183

CONTENTS

CHAPTER VIII. INDIA'S NEED OF EMIGRATION

Emigration an economic necessity for India – Case of Madras Presidency – Irregularity of harvests – Decline of local industries – Western influences – The land system – The Mirasdars – Debts and peasants' enslavement – Emigration under present conditions – Dislike of emigration prevalent among all castes – Conditions overseas – Efforts to secure home surroundings – The Khangani – Emigrants' helplessness p. 200

CONCLUSION

Japanese, Chinese and Indian emigrants contrasted – Serious effects of anti-emigration laws – Racial hostility – The White man's predominance – Numbers actually a cause of weakness for Asia p. 229

BIBLIOGRAPHY

p. 245

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

CHINESE COOLIES IN THE RED RIVER DELTA	<i>Frontispiece</i>
PEASANTS' HOMESTEADS IN HIROSHIMA	<i>facing page 66</i>
EMIGRANTS ON THE ROAD TO MANCHURIA	„ 106
RESTING BY THE ROADSIDE	„ 106
CHINESE EMIGRANTS FROM SHANTUNG	„ 120
CHINESE EMIGRANTS BOARDING THE TRAIN AT DAIREN	„ 120
CHINESE EMIGRANTS ON THE VOYAGE TO DAIREN	„ 128
TAMIL PORTERS IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY	„ 202
INDIAN SETTLEMENT IN THE COCOA TREE PLANTATIONS	„ 202

LIST OF MAPS

	PAGE
JAPAN — SHOWING INTENSITY OF CULTIVATION	71
DISTRIBUTION OF CHINESE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD	93
CHINESE EMIGRATION INTO MANCHURIA	117
CHINESE IN FRENCH INDO-CHINA	131
DISTRIBUTION OF INDIANS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD	185

FOREWORD

THIS book, written by a young Frenchman, is intended to direct the attention of Europe to the problems of Asia. The title itself indicates the root of those problems. Asia is suffering, far more than even the most crowded countries of Europe, from over-population. That means poverty and misery for several hundred millions of human beings. It also means restlessness, sedition and civil wars. These factors in turn stimulate a migratory movement on the part of the more enterprising Asiatics, struggling to escape from the miseries of the land of their birth. It is this last fact that specially affects European countries and countries across the sea that have been developed by Europeans. As soon as Indians or Chinese begin to settle in regions already partly occupied by Europeans grave difficulties arise. The difference of colour creates a distinction that is both obvious and permanent, and in practice generally involves social hostility. Some of the results ensuing are set forth in the pages of this book.

The author also deals briefly and concisely with the special problems of the three principal Asiatic countries, India, China and Japan. With regard to the last mentioned, he brings out the fact that, though the Japanese are becoming painfully overcrowded in the

FOREWORD

rather small islands which they occupy, they individually dislike to emigrate; they are too deeply attached to their own land and to its traditions.

But their personal reluctance to emigrate does not prevent the Japanese from bitterly resenting the bar that is now placed upon their entry into countries occupied by the white races. This application of the colour bar is regarded as an insult by the Japanese nation and adds impetus to the ambition of Japan to conquer new territories and make them her own, so as to find room for her ever-expanding population. The alternative remedy of reducing the growth of population by the practice of birth control is not popular. It is turned down both on religious and on imperialistic grounds. Though the Japanese recognise that their country is already over-crowded, they apparently want their population to go on increasing so that Japan may occupy a still bigger position in the world. From this point of view the over-population of Japan is a distinct military danger to other countries.

In the case of China the question is economic, not military. The Chinese are perfectly willing to emigrate. Starving peasants stream in thousands northwards to Manchuria, hoping there to find employment and food; many of them die on the road. Also enterprising Chinese traders emigrate to French Indo-China, where they build up successful business concerns, much to the annoyance of competing European firms. Chinese labourers also emigrate, largely to British Malaya, to work in the tin mines and the rubber plantations. In British Malaya the Chinese find

FOREWORD

complete liberty. 'They pay the same taxes as Europeans or Indians, have the right of ownership of land, and may be granted concessions to lay out plantations and to work the mines.' British Malaya is one of the few parts of the world where racial hostilities seem to be non-existent. Indians, Chinese, Dutch, English and French, all meet together and join in common enterprises without friction. The explanation probably is that the natural resources of the Malay Peninsula are so rich, and as yet so little developed, that there is – or was until the recent trade depression – plenty of room for all the various races that had settled there to seek a living or a fortune.

In contrast, we find in the British colony of Natal bitter hostility between Europeans and Indians. When Indians first came to South Africa as labourers, indentured to their employers, they were welcomed by the whites, but as soon as Indian traders came and opened shops in competition with European shopkeepers, the fat was in the fire, and laws were passed by the Natal legislature placing the Indians in a position of legal and political inferiority. This action of the colonial legislature was naturally resented by the fairly considerable Indian population then settled in Natal, and a young Indian lawyer practising in Natal came to England to appeal to the Imperial Government to forbid this departure from the principle of equal rights for all – 'without distinction of colour, origin, language or creed' – which was laid down by proclamation when British rule was first established in South Africa. His appeal was rejected on the ground – as the present

FOREWORD

writer was personally informed by the then prime minister -- that Natal was a self-governing colony. Shortly afterwards this young Indian lawyer went back to India; he has since become world famous as the Mahatma Gandhi.

In recent years other British Dominions have taken measures to exclude Indians from their territories, in spite of the fact that when Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India she declared that her Indian subjects should be free to travel to and reside in any portion of her dominions. It is not surprising that such action by the British Dominions should be deeply resented by Indians of every race and creed, and it is certain that the bitterness thus engendered has helped to stimulate the spirit of revolt now raging throughout India against British rule.

Meanwhile the Asiatic millions continue to multiply their numbers without regard to the available means of living. The resulting misery and unrest constitute a threat to the peace, and a clog on the progress, of the world.

HAROLD COX.

INTRODUCTION

The aftermath of War – Material prosperity of America – Man-power of the East – Teeming Millions – Clash of civilizations – Unconsciousness of power – The bar to emigrants.

It is only of late years that Europe has realized the existence of forces that surpass her own.

She is the land in whose deep soil the ideas which have spread throughout the world have matured during many centuries. She has given birth to the sentiments and ideals by which states are overturned. Arts conceived after slow and laborious travail, creations amassed during the ages by her sons, have been copied all over the world, and distant races have neglected their native talents to imitate a model that itself might be but a copy. Forms of European activity, inventions brought into being among communities to meet the needs of the hour, have been assimilated by the younger nations, or their adoption has been enforced upon the older races by outside influences, though no attempt had been made to prepare them to receive them.

But after having sacrificed the best of her manhood for four years merely to encompass her own destruction, after having dissipated her strength in internal strife until she became one vast Balkan Peninsula, Europe realised the price she had paid for the losses of conflict. The notion of the struggle for existence

INTRODUCTION

had to be revised; those who had carried off the greatest victories were not those who had gained the most. The conquerors were those who had engaged in the conflict with the smallest forces or at the latest hour. Once the storm had passed, the shrewdest observers realized that, even if Europe still retained all the prestige of her creations, she was beginning to lose their benefits. From the shores of little Europe the Governments watched uneasily the growth of powers overseas and were conscious of dizziness when they surveyed whatever lay beyond their own continent.

Europe might possess the superiority of her culture and civilization, old indeed, but of no fixed abode, wherein since the days of ancient Greece intelligence and action had been blended in unbroken harmony. She might retain the supremacy of quality. But where quantity was concerned the balance was against her. She seemed to be losing her place in the universe; she lacked the power of numbers and of masses.

On the one side, America was developing her material output beyond all precedence. Her manufactured articles exceeded the sum total of those of any other country in the world; her trade expanded, and with its unlimited publicity inundated every continent; her wealth absorbed the very life-blood of the nations. Her business organizations surpassed those of the other countries, just as her immense buildings overtopped the few storeys of which their houses consisted.

On the other side, in the supply of men, Asia possessed vast reserves, masses that swarmed and

INTRODUCTION

multiplied beyond all reckoning. Asia alone maintained within her territories 'teeming races of mankind, more numerous than all the white peoples of all the other continents. These masses, scarcely understood and still enshrouded in mystery, stirred with ambitions which were all the more disquieting since the source of their inspiration was less clearly defined.

On the score of material wealth or man power statistics were against Europe. If it were a question of men, their products or handiwork, Europe bent beneath the load of numbers. The material greatness of America suggested by contrast the 'Decline of Europe,' but the endless reserves of humanity in Asia 'The Twilight of the White Races.'*

Actually the newly born power of Asia arose less from her numerical superiority than from her consciousness of it. In every country of that continent orators, revolutionaries and nationalists proceeded to brandish in the Press, at public meetings and parliamentary sessions, as a counter thrust to Western aspirations, the argument of their own superiority of numbers. They confused actual power with the mere numbers of their countrymen, and with a cool disregard of the possibilities of individual merit, were for ever harping on the sum total of their population. 'We Chinese,' said Sun-Yat-Sen in 1924 in a speech at Kobi, 'are 400 millions. We have the largest population in the world. We are by nature peaceful, it is

* See Demangeon, *Déclin de l'Europe* and M. Muret, *Crépuscule des Nations Blanches*.

INTRODUCTION

true. But the moment that it becomes a struggle for existence, for our right to live, shall we then submit to treatment of pacifism and, above all, when we shall have won over the other peoples of Asia to the idea of a Pan-Asiatic League? If this League were formed the fate of Europe would be sealed. China can reckon on 400 millions of men, India on 350 millions, Burma, Annam and Siam each a score of millions more. We Asiatics form three-quarters of the human race. We are 1200 millions against less than 400 millions in Europe and America. If we chose to have recourse to arms, would not the battle go in our favour? But this would be simply to follow the example of the brigands who have caused us so much suffering. This course we will not adopt. Let us make our complaints, conscious of our strength. Let us be humane, as long as we are not driven to extremities.* In the same tone the Indians swell with pride when they compare their 300 millions of men with the few dozen millions of the race which conquered them. 'India, proud mother of her 300 million sons, to whom she has given birth,' says the hymn of Indian Nationalists. And enclosed within her islands little Japan, like the Italy of Mussolini, eagerly awaits the day when her population will have exceeded 100 millions.

What vague, deceptive memories of teeming masses does the traveller recall from one end of Asia to the

*Speech delivered at the Girls' High School at Kobi, November 28th, 1924. The exaggerated numbers quoted are obvious, but typical of the orator's sentiments.

INTRODUCTION

other! Crowds in the Indian valleys, in their flowing shirts and linen turbans, crowds in yellow and blue, red and white; crowds that swarm in the dust of the temples like the gods carved or painted on walls, columns and porticos. Crowds in the Tonkin Delta, brown as the muddy earth of the ricefields, toiling under grey, drizzling rains, even more numerous as they throng the roads than when labouring in the fields, busier in bearing on their shoulders their harvest produce than in wresting it from the soil. Crowds in the great Chinese cities, half sunk in dirt and mud, swarming like ants in dark, narrow, winding alleys, in which the sickening stench of decaying meat or putrid fish ever lingers. Crowds that leave the solid ground of the towns to huddle upon the canals, rivers and even the sea, in their little junks with their crooked sails, top-heavy with human cargoes.

In his own mind each being in this vast crowd must surely be impressed with the changeless scene of the masses around him. It is a mental attitude not easy to realize, a passive spirit, maybe, towards external forces, a resignation in the presence of disaster and death, a yearning to be lost in Nature's infinity. Perhaps it is the realization of the nothingness of the individual in the midst of the crowd that has contributed to this thirst for renunciation.

Or possibly so widespread a competition has made the struggle for existence too difficult. Amid so many human beings merely to ward off starvation calls for a mighty effort. Only in Asia is the stranger thus direfully impressed by the material aspect of the fight

INTRODUCTION

for existence. It is a physical struggle of man against man. In the streets of Canton, Calcutta or Singapore the white man has only to raise a finger and a swarm of coolies rushes towards him. Victory will go to the swiftest and strongest, to him who has shouted the loudest and who has proved physically the fittest. But the same embittered eagerness will be found in the intellectual classes and among the pupils who graduate from the schools is the same mad rush to obtain posts, employments and situations. How futile to speak of man's dignity when there is not enough air for him to breathe! In the midst of the crowds of Asia, man is stifled.

Western influence has by no means diminished the prolificity of the Asiatic races. It seems rather to have tended to increase it. If we take as an example Japan, the country in the far East where reliable statistics have been available for the longest time, we see that the astonishing increase in her population only began after the social revolution which opened up the country to the Westerners. In India, between 1871 and 1911, the number of inhabitants increased by 60 millions. China, with its fantastic and contradictory statistics, is still a mystery; but recent research, undertaken in the coastal districts, shows that the number of inhabitants has nearly doubled within half a century.

Yet the death rate, on the whole, has not diminished in modern Asia. In Japan and India, the only two countries for which we have accurate returns over

INTRODUCTION

any considerable period, it has very sensibly increased. The few thousands of doctors, nurses or midwives whom Europeans and Americans have sent to Asia, or whom they have trained in their schools there, are lost in the midst of these masses, grimy with the dust and mud of the tropics and decimated by vermin and epidemic. Wide-spread famines and floods, the appalling disasters with which Nature overwhelms man in these countries, where monsoons bring fertility or ruin, have often been avoided, thanks to the engineers' skill. Western ideas have begun to destroy the old bloodthirsty beliefs and murderous customs, such as the exposure of babies in China and, in India, the killing off of girls and premature marriages.

Yet the clash of the two civilizations has probably cost more lives than it has saved. The sudden breaking away from the habits of centuries has doubtless caused more deaths than did the respect for time-honoured prejudices. Factory life in the cities, exacting regular work and the rush of modern existence have caused widespread reactions among a people where each man was accustomed to work alone or among his kinsfolk, among workers who have deserted their booth for the engine-room, or peasants who have left their ricefield for the suburbs of the great bustling westernised cities. Again, certain requirements have been created which often do not correspond to the slow adaptation of the Eastern races to their new surroundings. The effect of alcohol on the Asiatic is often devastating and it has frequently been observed that among people accustomed to work half-naked the

INTRODUCTION

regular wearing of garments has caused more victims than epidemics and famines.

In Asia birth-rate has nearly everywhere risen in greater proportion than death-rate. Although many customs have been abolished, the feeling which inspired them has not changed. In tropical countries, where people breed in mire and mud like animals, western refinement has not yet reached human beings. Respect for a woman, the possible danger to her health from childbirth and nursing have not so far provoked any dread of successive confinements. The role of the mother has not been counterbalanced by the caprice of the wife. Among races sunk in misery and ignorance sexual devices have not yet penetrated. Europe and America, which for over a century have poured into Asia their cotton-goods, machinery, and articles of luxury, their political systems and philosophies, have not as yet spread their idea of birth-control, an idea whose expansion is becoming characteristic of western civilization. Again, industrial revolutions are often accompanied by a heavy birth-rate. In this respect Asia was bound to follow the example of England of a hundred years ago. At the beginning of last century, in spite of widespread disturbances and misery caused by the introduction of machinery, population greatly increased in Great Britain. At the very time when Malthus's treatise was published, the birth-rate was greater than ever.

Finally the renewal of national feeling in Asia, the very creed of Nationalism among certain peoples, has revived the moral duty of having a family and ancestor

INTRODUCTION

worship, in order to encourage men to have numerous progeny. It seems that the influence of the new civilizations has been rather to increase the prolific power of Asia, to intensify the great movement of life and death, and to unchain more violently the powers of creation and destruction. A rift in the stability of civilization has corresponded to a rupture in the stability of human forces.

But though intercourse with the West may have caused the rates of birth or mortality in Asia considerably to vary, such changes are trivial in comparison with the alterations in the sphere of economics which they have brought about. Has western skill and enterprise allowed production so far to increase as to supply all the requirements of the excess in individuals? Or have the advantages of a new vigour been counter-balanced by the clash of a revolution which came about too fiercely? The answers to these questions are contradictory, according to the ambitions or tendencies of the men who reply to them.

Western skill has increased production in unimaginable proportions, created new requirements and thereby new sources of work, opened out to man's energies regions as yet unexploited. Between the solitude of barren mountains or the luxuriant jungles and the plains with their antiquated tillage, where hopeless beings herd together, the traveller passes through regions where life seems less arduous, lands of rice or cornfields, of sugar-cane or soy, where beneath the white sun of the tropics the Dravidian, naked and

INTRODUCTION

bony, the giant Aryan with his coloured turban, the Annamite, sulky but smiling, the short-breeched Chinamen are toiling, backs bent over daily tasks. Lands which differ as widely in climate and resources as in the men who break and fertilize the soil. Yet in one respect they are still alike—in such places man and Nature co-operate more closely, the workers have more room to breathe and more possessions to share with one another, the houses are more healthy and holdings more extensive. These are the plains and plateaux recently colonized thanks to western skill: the Punjaub which, thanks to the British efforts, can claim to be one of the world's great granaries; the delta of Cochin China, that was practically deserted before the French subdued it; Southern Manchuria, which Japan, the young rival of western civilizations, has made productive by her energy and capital. There are, too, the broken lands, the slopes and heights untilled of yore, whose soil the white man has begun to make profitable by developing the plantations and growing raw materials for industries; the mountains or hillsides of Ceylon or Assam, the Malay Peninsula or Java, the Annam range or the Philippines, to which the workers of Asia have flocked in the wake of European or American capital.

Nor is the argument, reiterated by agitators from one end of Asia to the other, to be lightly set aside; that though modern skill may have done much for the earth, it would seem to have done nothing for man.

In colonial countries production, say the opponents

INTRODUCTION

of the West, has increased enormously, but it has not been employed to support the people who inhabit them. Newly acquired wealth has not remained in the land from which it has been extracted at the cost of laborious efforts. The corn of the Punjaub is not consumed by the Indian, while rice of Burmese is almost wholly exported from Rangoon to distant countries. The rubber of Ceylon or Malaya is destined for the great markets of Europe or America, as are also the greater part of Indian cotton at the present time, the coffee from Java or Further India, the copra from the tropics. The owners of the plantations are not natives and the profits from sale do not return to those who dwell on the land. Even in independent countries, they say, the resources have been developed by the aid of foreign capital and the newly found wealth goes into the coffers of the foreigner.

Such statements are grossly biassed. The cultivating of virgin soil has provided many different kinds of employment to a considerable number of native workers. The fields or villages of the plantations, the new farms of the countryside, offer a means of escape from their wretchedness to an annually increasing number of the inhabitants of the over-populated countries. The development of the field of human activity may prove an effective remedy for the over-population of Asia, not so much by the new wealth which it produces as by the chances of work it offers her men and women.

Lands densely thronged with old established peoples

INTRODUCTION

have, in places, been reinvigorated by western skill and enterprise. Irrigation has brought water to lands where no water was or wherever its supply was too abundant, attempts have been made to prevent floods by barrages. Powers of purchase have been extended by lowering the price of the manufactured articles. New markets have been opened out in regions closed to them before, and local famines become of rarer occurrence through the construction of railways and roads.

The benefits of modern technique, it is true, bring also disadvantages in their train. While they increase global productions owing to their changes in systems, the functions of each individual are drastically altered. As population increases, the share of work which the community requires men to contribute is transformed. Distribution of wealth, especially that earned by labour, varies. New demands for labour are created, while others disappear. In the violent changes which to-day overwhelm Asia, a whole list of individuals cease to find their places. Whether real or imaginary, over-population seems during the centuries of transition a factor calling for all the more serious consideration, in that the numbers thrown out of employment and the waste of human energy are more extensive.

Machinery throughout the continent has diminished the demands for manual labour. Nationalists and the disgruntled elements have not failed to exploit, from one end of Asia to the other, the exasperation of the masses, whom machinery has robbed,

INTRODUCTION

perhaps only for the time being, but at one fell blow, of their daily bread. Gandhi's arguments in favour of the return to the small craftsman are not only moral, political and economic; they accord with the true democratic spirit. In his diatribes against the West, Sun-Yat-Sen has also dealt with the problem of machinery. 'Take the coolies of Canton. No profession is more commonly followed than theirs . . . What an amazing change has machinery brought about in their lives. . . . In former days to transport a load of 10,000 piculs of goods from Canton to Shiukwan required 10,000 men working each for ten days; to-day for the same task, only ten men are necessary driving a train for eight hours. When trains began to run and to replace transport by labour, the coolies between Canton and Shiukwan simply disappeared. . . . After the introduction of machinery a large number of men suddenly lost their trade and could no longer find work or earn their living. Westerners have called this great change the Industrial Revolution. This revolution has caused much suffering to the workers.'*

The small artisans whose booth is empty of customers; labourers no longer required to dehusk the rice which they have harvested; peasants' homesteads where the spinning wheel is silent; coolies on the highways whose pitches have been taken from them — a whole crowd of destitute encumber villages, towns and countryside; all Asia is beginning to look over-

* Sun-Yat-Sen, San Min Chui, *The Three Principles of the People* (Commercial Press, Shanghai), pp. 367, 368.

INTRODUCTION

populated even in districts where the masses of people are not over excessive.

In reality, the evils of machinery arise more from the irrevocably fixed quantity of men that it keeps employed, rather than their limited number. In fields, workshops and cottages work is elastic or may be infinitely compressed. Suppose that ten men instead of one turn up at a ricefield; it is by no means certain that the work done is ten times more effective; but each newcomer can find his task to do and add something to the work of all. Each man's labour retains its individual character; the tool in his hand is dependent upon the man's strength and the total of individuals produces a sum total of work. In machinery, on the other hand, man stationed at his post intervenes only at a certain moment at work which he himself has not set in motion. In order to multiply the output of the men, the number of machines must be multiplied. The capital invested assigns the exact output of labour brought to the task. In boundless Asia, where the extreme variations of the forces of nature call for a certain elasticity in the conditions of work, the system of machinery keeps every year a great number of individuals in idleness.

These machines, this organized industry enforced upon Asia, are indeed of the most modern and most exact types. Having started from Europe, they most commonly reach Asia via America. In England at the time of the revolution a century ago the adoption of machinery was of slow growth; it was an inspiration of the men's brains who had adopted it at a time when

INTRODUCTION

its needs became apparent; improvements were effected by stages and only by similar stages was the special function of the work brought about as technique progressed. In Asia the most modern methods have been forced from without upon a country, whose people had not even been prepared even for the most elementary forms of machinery.

Machinery has not only directly effected the distribution of the populace by limiting the demand for manual labour. It has radically transformed the entire economic life throughout Asia. The ever growing concentration of industries, the continuous improvement in means of communication, the growing interdependence of districts with districts and between villages and towns are also the results of machinery, and cannot fail in turn to disturb the mutual relations between man and man in Asia. But her peoples have not easily adapted themselves to these changes; classes of society have not always had sufficient flexibility to change. Sometimes the old organized societies have resisted, sometimes they have been brought into line or dissolved. Rarely have they been entirely replaced by others more fit for the new regime. At this fatal contact between the new system of economy and the ancient order of society, the resistance of the latter is doubtless more effective than the emboldened efforts of the first. But the unrest created by this conflict adds, to some extent everywhere in Asia, to the troubles of over-population. The instability of recognized institutions makes the struggle for existence more severe. And it is difficult to point to the

INTRODUCTION

sufferer whose troubles are due to the fact that his presence is redundant, or because society was not so constructed as to find room for him.

The conditions of country life are the slowest to change. In China where the village has begun to open out by contact with roads and railways, the system of working the lands by one large family is still almost everywhere in force. But the old time working by village is falling out of fashion. The nucleus of each village organization is breaking up without the more widely organized province or state replacing them. The ties which kept together members of the same family are not yet loosened; but those which held family to family to the lands which they tilled are already disappearing. Differences of opinion among the various cultivators and, sometimes, their mutual hostility are to-day one of the main causes of the anarchy in the rural districts of China. In India the former owners, themselves country born and bred, have almost universally maintained their sway over the peasants, even where these are already in the employment of the High Commissioner and his representatives. In Japan oral contracts, holdings for varying kinds of service performed, have continued, although the owners have often gone to live in the towns and the relations between the two are conducted through an intermediary rather than in person. The variety of the old systems of land tenure is now everywhere complicated by new systems due to an evolution more or less rapid, in a new method of an economic life.

INTRODUCTION

Instability is a factor no less prevalent in the newly formed middle classes. The growth of the bourgeoisie is one of the most remarkable changes in contemporary history of Asia. Thanks to the development of industry and trade, and all the new openings offered to capital and energy, a young middle class has rapidly come into being. But its growth has often been disproportionate. The balance between the different elements which compose it has not been maintained. And it has not always found a place in the established classes of society. The moneyed middle classes and the intellectual have often stood apart from each other. In India influential business men in the towns or seaports are often looked down upon by the Brahman professor and lawyer. In China the class of the young intelligensia is at variance with the merchant class. In Japan civil service appointments are encumbered with starving candidates. Stoppage of work and insecurity of employment cause as much distress in Asia among the middle classes as among the peasants and working people.

If the changes in the East are not entirely free from disquietude, at any rate they can afford men readier means of submitting to them. The ties which hold the masses of Asia fast to their native soil are breaking one after another, and means of escape are daily more numerous.

Ancient beliefs, customs of former days utterly opposed to changes of abode are, as will be shown, always very active. But can they always resist outside

INTRODUCTION

influences? The caste system still so rigid in the distant lands of Asia is surely already weakening in the towns and seaports in breezes blowing from afar, and the fear of impure contact beyond the seas is sensibly lessening.

Has not Japan, shut off for two centuries from the rest of the world, unlocked her gateways for more than fifty years? And in China, once a country of trade by lengthy stages and of perilous voyages — do not the waning influence of village life and the widespread disorders among society at large drive the peasants away from their immediate surroundings and lands and multiply the numbers who have left her shores? The wider influences from without are freeing man from the shackles of the past, from the bonds which thwarted his movements and travels.

Increasing travelling facilities and the amazing reduction in distances are further incentives to journey forth. Railways, whose lines run from one end to another of the vast territories of Asia, have multiplied seasonal migrations to an astounding extent; they enable the peasant of Southern India to proceed every year to the far North, even to the plantations of Assam, and six months later to be home again on his native ricefields. Or again, the Chinaman of the Chang-Tong may gather his harvest in the extreme north of Manchuria and return to celebrate the New Year at his own fireside.

In the vast ports with their teeming populace, steamships of America, England, France, Holland or Japan, haggle for human cargo as eagerly as for mer-

INTRODUCTION

chandise. The West has increased the means of conveying over the globe men and goods for the emporiums with equal rapidity

But at the very time when the chances to emigrate were increasing or the necessity of settling in other lands was being realized as an economic need, government legislation, with ever-growing severity, barred the Asiatic from the great sea routes. North America, Australia, South Africa and most of the lands ruled by white men closed their harbours to men of colour or only admitted a negligible number.* The bar seems to have been set up for all time. It is not proposed here to dwell at any length upon the theories so constantly debated as to the rights of people to leave their own countries, nor upon the presence on these lands now barred to newcomers of colonies of former emigrants — branches of the great trunk from which they sprang and whose growth no fresh sap came to invigorate. The story of those migrations belongs to the past. Unless the present settlement of nations be completely overturned, a reversion to the old system seems highly improbable. Countries admitting Asiatic workers are less and less numerous. Overseas, only South America and the Pacific Isles are still open to them, and in the former with very strict precautions. The great emigrations which we propose to study do not pass beyond the continent from which they set forth, and are strictly organized. Emigrations of the earlier type still occur; such as when masses of human

* For the results of Eastern emigration to U.S.A, see R. D. Mackenzie, *Oriental Exclusion* (1927).

INTRODUCTION

beings are driven from their homes by unexpected catastrophes or famine and who flee onwards haphazard and halt indiscriminately on their way. They are like those clouds of pollen which the wind blows onwards in the forests till they fall to earth and fertilize the young plants. Emigration of the workers also continues – a stream of willing labour, directed to distant lands by private agencies and state services. But already under western influence emigration turns of its own accord to lands already being exploited, regions in which capital abounds and fortunes are quickly made. Emigration becomes development.

But confined to its present-day limits, is emigration sufficient? Can Asia absorb her own surplus population and is not the local surplus in certain districts actually a phase of the general undevelopment?

Is her prolificity of human beings a disturbing factor and a weakness? Or is it a promise of future strength? And if one day it is likely to prove a disquieting element in the world at large, can it attract a disintegrated world by the fields that it offers for rivals to compete in, or is it merely the goal of an irresistible mass movement?

PART I
OVER-POPULATION IN
JAPAN

CHAPTER I

OVERCROWDING AND UNREST

Intense interest in the problem throughout Japan – Birth rates – Food supplies – Rural discontent – Smallness of holdings – Rise in farm rentals – Class struggles in the countryside – Insecurity of labour – Middle class unemployment – Modern literature.

OF all the questions with which after the Great War the Japanese Empire is closely concerned, none has provoked more discussion than that of over-population. It provides the economist with a subject for his studies, inspires the journalist with matter for his daily onslaught in the Press, and the statesmen with arguments against American restriction and for permission to the Japanese to emigrate. It justifies the colonist in urging the Metropolis to consider lands overseas as centres of production, the merchant and the industrialist in dwelling on the importance of economic progress and asking for credits, and the syndicalist in his demand for protection for the out-of-work. Over-population was the all-absorbing topic of the various political parties during the electoral campaign of 1928. In July, 1927, a commission was appointed by the

The author is indebted for much valuable information to Mr. Masar Takahashi, Lecturer at the Fukuoka University, who kindly accompanied him in his travels through Japan and translated many treatises on the countries visited.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Prime Minister, Baron Tanaka, to enquire into the best methods of combatting the evil and its after effects.

It is only of late years that the problem has called for consideration. It began to assume importance with Japanese evolution towards western civilization and grew yearly more critical with the development of the modern economic system. Before the Meiji Revolution in 1867, which definitely westernized their Empire, the population of Japan seems to have remained stationary for more than a century and a half. According to the best historians of feudal times, from the beginning of the eighteenth till the middle of the nineteenth century numbers only increased by a few hundred thousand.*

But every census after the Revolution begins to show a marked increase of population which soon became very considerable. From 34,000,000 in 1875 numbers rose to 44,800,000 in 1900, and to nearly 60,000,000 in 1925. Within fifty years population has nearly doubled. The average yearly rate of increase has risen in vast proportions. What are the forces which have made this country, whose population before its transformation was stagnant, more prolific and more overcrowded than any other in the world? Under western influence many scourges which once lay waste in Japan have disappeared. The truceless feudal wars have ceased, widespread famines, of which

* See Eijiro Honjo, *The population of Japan in the Tokugawa Era*, p. 26.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

at least three at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century have left memories of ghastly hecatombs, do not now break out. The rigidly set frontiers of the petty lordships of the Daimios have, to all purposes, been broken down, and henceforth by ever extending routes commodities are despatched with growing facilities across the Islands. Periodic epidemics are fewer, and the lives of children more widely respected, the killing of babies, especially of girls, much practised about 1800, being now vigorously punished. But the downfall of the feudal system, improvement in sanitation and laws are not in themselves enough to explain the increase; the death-rate, indeed, has not diminished in modern Japan.* The rise in the birth-rate is indeed astonishing. From 1872 to 1926 the totals of births rose almost continuously. In 1872 it was at the rate of 25 per thousand, in 1926, 34. Such an increase is without parallel in history and would be impossible to explain if it did not correspond with a social and economic evolution whose rapidity was no less extraordinary.

Let us first consider the social changes. The overlord of the past, in his confined estate, with his army of mercenaries, had every reason to dread any excessive increase in the number of his subjects. The modern state, on the contrary, with its ideal of national manpower needed the strength of the masses. Religion, whose influence it strengthened and spread, the new-

* Death-rate per 1000 inhabitants has actually risen from 18.3 (1874-1883) to 22.5 (1914-1923).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

born Shinto, preaches as the finest of ideals the rearing of the family and devotion to the Emperor. From his first year at school the young Japanese learns his duties as a subject, in his imperial catechism. Not to have children is a sacrilege against Religion and the State. The code of criminal law makes abortion, which was widely tolerated under the Tokugawas, a criminal offence. Procreation is a religious and national duty.

But, above all, the sudden economic development seems to supply food for every mouth. No longer impeded by local restrictions, the farmer can make sure of selling the produce of his land and the consumer of obtaining regular supplies. Industry attracts to the towns springing up so rapidly manual labourers for whom the demand seems endless. Sources of material prosperity are growing, nor is it yet possible to reckon the ultimate limits of their growth. And this prosperity came so rapidly that requirements have not yet grown in proportion. The taste for luxuries has not made parents so desirous of wealth as to limit the numbers of their children. To her swift rise in the world of economics Japan owes her sudden prolificity.

The impulse is now irresistible. From the beginning of the century the country was faced with the problem of over-population. Economists can easily prove that the output of commodities required has not grown with the same rapidity as the number of inhabitants.*

* See Allen, *The Population Problem in Japan* (1926); L. F. Ayusawa, *Le Problème de la Population et l'Industrialisation de Japan* (*International Review*, Oct., 1927); Shiroshi Nasu, *Problem of Population and Food Supply in Japan* (1927).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

The ricefield acreage may have extended, the return per acre of rice may be fifty per cent greater, the output of rice itself be practically doubled between 1880-1927,* yet owing to improved standard of living and increase of the population, demand has outrun production. The margin between these two factors is to-day nearly seven times as high as it was at the end of the nineteenth century. The importation of colonial rice, chiefly from Formosa and Corea is not enough to make up the deficiency.† During the last five years an average of 70,000,000 yen,‡ of rice has had to be imported annually from abroad, chiefly from Indo China and Burma. As for imported food stuffs the total is three times as great and without any corresponding exportation worth recording. Overpopulation in Japan to-day is shown by a balance sheet that spells ruin for the country. Without venturing on the wild calculations of economists it is easy to foresee, if the difference between consumption and production goes on increasing with the same speed, a difficult future for Japan.

But the statistics quoted are mere theories on Japanese over-population. We must study the evil at first hand, as it is seen throughout the country, if we are to understand its character and importance. We must state its incidence as it actually exists and observe the restlessness through which it makes its voice heard.

* From 35,268 kokus to 62,101. 1 koku approx. 5 bushels.

† The average annual deficit was 1894-98, 1,393,000 kokus; 1922-26, 8,498,000 kokus.

‡ One yen = 2s. $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

To get an indelible impression of rural over-population we shall have to go to the irrigated districts where the ricefields flourish. Like other Asiatic countries, Japan presents a marked contrast in possessing an interior which is hilly and uncultivated, and a fertile coast where stupendous and ever-growing masses herd together on the ricefields. The only contrast to this picture in Japan are the valleys sparsely inhabited and dominated by that other great resource of the countryside, the mulberry tree. The global density of Japan is exceeded by Belgium, Holland and England.* But the density of population in the arable districts reaches the huge total of 600 inhabitants to the square mile—a total unsurpassed in any part of the globe, except in Belgium.

Even on those ricefields of the south west away from the towns beside the Inner Sea in the provinces of Kagawa or Hyogo, the population is so dense that the traveller seems still to be wandering in some suburb. As far as the eye can see, across the whole length of the plains multitudes of little wooden houses rise in the midst of the fields, all exactly alike, of one or two storeys—all so fragile and spotless with their overhanging roofs, pine-beams and balconies and their bright paper partitions within. It is difficult to say if they are separated or grouped together in order, so closely do the little dwellings seem to nestle together, though gardens divide them. The number of telephone wires

* Figures per square mile (1931), Belgium 663, Holland 561, England 468, Japan 321.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

further suggests the uninspiring appearance of a vast suburb; the posts seen everywhere are as much a feature of Japanese countryside as the hedges of England or the motor car of America, not only by the roadside but as far as the squares where the ricefields are banked up.

Fields and roads literally swarm with humanity. Japanese ricefields in early summer remind one of the pictures in school books where, so as to teach the greatest number of names, the various kinds of field-works are shown side by side. In one square files of women, their heads bound in coloured handkerchiefs, plant in rows along a wooden rod the seeds of young rice – hulling. In another square behind his ox a peasant guides his wooden plough – labour. Beyond the ricefield, a man stands on a wheel with cups which he turns with his bare feet – irrigation. On a narrow slope an old man digs little holes for seeds, while another is throwing manure on land already sown. Each gets out of his corner of earth all that human toil can extract from it. The ground under cultivation is not left fallow when summer is over. As the comparative severity of Japanese autumns does not permit, as in India, a second rice harvest, the farmer sows barley or rice after the summer. The allotments are so tiny that machinery has of necessity to be excluded and antiquated methods of cultivation employed. But the sight of people swarming like ants in the ricefields, the cultivation of every nook and cranny, the abundant fertilizing, the energy of all the field-workers leave an impression of an extremely intensive cultivation of the fruits of the earth, continuously tended.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

In a country where the great masses on the countryside are potential voters over-population might well spell disaster. But the agricultural labourer scarcely counts at all in Japanese economic system, above all, in the ricefield. Most cultivators are leaseholders or owners whose properties are so scanty that they are obliged to be tenants as well. Their development is a family affair. When the family increases, its members continue to toil laboriously on the same ricefield or else go off to the town; it would rarely occur to them to apply for work in the neighbouring property. In this case the signs of over-population are not to be seen in the numbers out of work, but rather in the excessive cutting up of holdings and the high price of rents.* The extent of land cultivated by a single Japanese family is extremely limited. Throughout the whole country each family, consisting on an average of five members, tills barely a hectare ($2\frac{1}{2}$ acres). In a rice district such as Kagawa the average (.85 per cent) is still lower. More than 35 per cent of Japanese cultivators farm less than one acre and nearly 70 per cent less than two. The tiny extent of all holdings is still more remarkable than the number of those under

* Numbers of families of labourers and percentage of each class.

	Tenants.	Tenant Owners.	Owners subletting.
1914.....	1,520,476	2,204,508	1,731,247
1919.....	1,545,639	2,234,801	1,700,747
1925.....	1,525,656	2,297,909	1,725,034
1914.....	27.87 p. 100	40.4 p. 100	31.73 p. 100
1919.....	28 "	40.77 "	31 "
1925.....	27.5 "	41.4 "	31 "

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

cultivation; nearly 50 per cent of the owners possess less than an acre and nearly 75 per cent less than two acres. Mere scraps of land under cultivation and tiny holdings are naturally more numerous in the South West. In the North averages are more extensive. Hokkaido is an exception in possessing a number of large estates and vast areas under cultivation.

The disadvantages of workings on so small a scale are still further complicated by sub-divisions into even smaller holdings. In the densely populated areas the ricefield is ubiquitous, extending to the house gardens. The field of barley or wheat is the same shape as the square ricefield plot, while the field itself is like a tiny kitchen garden with the sunlight showing distinctly how much it has been cut up. In any odd corner left free are planted vegetables, sweet potatoes or peas.

Though usually grown in wider spaces, the mulberry tree is sometimes lopped and planted on the alluvial plains on the embankments between two ricefields. The appearance of these fields is in marked contrast to the vast stretches that meet the eye in Burma or Cochin-China.

The number of would-be tenants in a country that has been so vigorously subdivided into small sites has put up the price of rents to an abnormal extent, a state of affairs shown in statistics, though these are not always reliable. In most districts the average rent in the ricefield exceeds the value of the crops by 55 per cent. The rise is the most marked in the

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

more densely populated districts. The cost of farm rents has become one of the most disquieting and the most widely discussed problems in Japanese economics. Statisticians, economists, officials, members of the Landlords' or Peasants' Associations have written on the subject a considerable number of reports, booklets or pamphlets.

The high price of rents has been all the more severely felt by the Japanese tenants since their budget has risen considerably. The peasants' requirements have increased, ties between town and country become closer; the farmers' sons and daughters have come back from the cities demanding greater luxuries. The peasant of to-day eats more fish, and rice often takes the place of the millet of former days.

Far from exercising a soothing influence on democratic activities, Japanese rural institutions seem rather to intensify them. If we compare in each district the relative price of land and rent we see not only that there is no exact co-relation between the two (that could hardly be expected), but that the districts in which the rent is by far the highest, are not by any means those where the price of land is equally high. The discrepancy is partly explained by the great number of sub-tenants. This arrangement is tolerated by the owners in many districts and is to some extent a guarantee for the tenant who sublets part of his lease; but wherever numbers have risen there are more applicants than farms to let, with the result that rents rise still higher.

But the tenants' chief difficulty is the uncertainty

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

in the methods of regulating payment. Formerly annual payments were in proportion to the harvest gathered, a system of payment by produce. To-day, at any rate in theory, payments are fixed, that is farm rent. The old custom however is not completely moribund; the process is one of transition. The actual practice is a compromise between the two methods. The owner allows the farmers a certain annual bonus if crops are bad. The average rent paid, which varies yearly, is from 4 to 5 per cent lower than the stated rent. But the landlords are the sole judges of the reduction to be allowed. The practice has neither the advantages of payment from crops nor of the fixed rental. The former custom is now disappearing and a new one coming into force and the decision as to which is to be adopted rests entirely with the owner.

Formerly all contracts were verbal and in most cases are so still. The length of tenancy was not specified and such is still the custom in many cases. But the more modern method of a written agreement and a fixed time limit deprives these verbal contracts for an indefinite period of their validity. The old custom dates from the days when the overlord lived on his estate, the peasant having frequent intercourse with him. The ties of dependence or protection and the feeling of a permanent authority, in the absence of contract, ensured good relationships between debtor and creditor, landlord and tenant.

Indirect relations in an increasing number of cases are to-day replacing these personal intercourses. Many of the great landowners, or those in a small way, no longer

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

live in the village. They reside in the capital or in the large towns.* Many customs, however, dating from a time when the foundations of society were entirely different, have continued. At the very time when over-population raises rents and the struggle for life is still harder, the situation is aggravated by institutions less easily defined.

The most dangerous results of this rural over-population has been the outbreak of class struggles of the most embittered violence throughout the country. On the ricefields, where houses almost touch each other, it is as easy for peasants to form a union as for the town workers. Quarrels between tenants and landlord about increased rentals have spread all over the south-west districts, Kansai and especially the banks of the Inland Sea that are terribly overcrowded.† Conflicts have broken out in all the provinces in almost all the ricefield villages, a state of affairs practically unknown before the Great War. Sudden risings have occurred against the landlord who refuses to lower, conditionally or definitely, his farm rents, houses are burnt, stores pillaged, the police even attacked.‡

Passive resistance is the more common form; in 1924, for instance, in the Saga district in the little village of Motoyamamura, the peasants, after having

* The former Feudal system was replaced by private ownership in 1872.

† Such regions as Nara, Osaka, Hyogo, Kagawa, Gifu and Fukuoka.

‡ See *The Labour Year Book of Japan* (1928). In 1926, for instance, there were 2,008 such outbreaks, in which over 150,000 tenants took part.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

vainly demanded a reduction of 30 per cent in their rents, determined to boycott their landlord. They formed Unions, and resolved to break off all relations with him, to refuse all payments, or to sell him anything, withdraw their children from the school and open one of their own, refuse — the greatest insult of all — to attend the marriage or the burial of any member of his family. When the owner does not reside on his own estate, the peasants wreak their vengeance on his agents or even on the officers of the law. Withdrawing children from the schools is one of the most common forms of boycotting. At Niigata, 750 sons of farmers left school as the result of a quarrel. The rebels set up evening classes in the villages; they even proposed to open a school of their own and government interference was necessary to prevent it being built. The dispute ended on most occasions in the law court of the district headquarters. A law passed in 1924 enacts that on the demands of either party concerned a legal decision must be pronounced between tenants and landlords.

The movement is gradually assuming a political character. Somewhat strange is the sight of these unions assembled to talk matters over in the back garden, seated on their straw mats, with their shaven heads and duly appointed legal adviser, one of the urban intelligensia in European costume. These local unions, some of which were Communist in sympathy, some Socialists, while others held more moderate views, and whose opponents in each district are the Landlords' Union, are formed in great numbers throughout Japan. At the central conference of

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Tenants' Union held annually at Osaka there were present in 1922 300 farmers; in 1926 numbers had risen to 60,000.

The Japanese Government attempts counter measures with considerable energy. Sometimes it employs coercion; it disbands the whole union professing these extreme views, the course taken in dealing with the communists' plot of April, 1928. Sometimes it employs propaganda, sending lecturers to the villages and exhibiting films in the schools of life pacific in outlook. This unrest in the countryside is a very serious danger for Japan.

For the last thirty years the towns have been able to relieve this over-population in the countryside. While this population was increasing, powerful industries were developing in the cities. Farmers' sons in considerable numbers went from their villages to the chief town of the district or even to the capital itself. The increase in the urban districts of Japan as compared with the total population was remarkable. In 1888 only 13 per cent of the Japanese lived in centres of an aggregate of more than 10,000 souls, whereas in 1925 the number was 37 per cent. The vast collecting together of people engaged in industries has reacted not only upon neighbouring rural districts, but even the distant mountain valleys. Development of machinery and production seemed to have established, especially during the War-time years of feverish activity, an ever-increasing demand for manual labour. Between 1900 and 1919 installations

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

of steam power increased more than tenfold,* cotton production was multiplied on the same enormous scale, and electric force tripled between only 1913 and 1919. During the War the number of factory employees nearly doubled.†

But after the Armistice and the artificial activity of war, the position of Japanese industry grew critical. Foreign markets are closing and the balance of trade, though satisfactory for the moment, is becoming very unfavourable. In almost every class of business industrial production has ceased to increase or is actually diminishing. The catastrophe of 1923 has merely afforded temporary work for some specialised industries. Some factories have closed down altogether since 1920, and when in 1927 the great panic in the bank occurred, bankruptcies were reported in town after town. The era of unbroken development seems at an end and that of unemployment is beginning.

Unemployment figures, it is true, are not high. In 1925 the Government published the results of a census taken of unemployed. Of 2,300,000 workers interrogated, 105,000 confessed that they were out of employment of any kind.‡ Still more suggestive are the figures of the Labour Exchanges recently set up in all industrial centres. Out of 1,140,000 workers who applied to these offices in 1925 it was only possible

* Steam power rose from 61,252 in 1895 to 789,965 in 1919: electric power, which in 1913 was 314,000 k.w. amounted in 1927 to 2,110,000 k.w.

† From 840,000 in 1913 to 1,463,000 in 1921.

‡ Preliminary Report of the Unemployment Census in Japan, 1925 (Bureau of Statistics of the Imperial Cabinet, Japan).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

to find work for 280,000, or scarcely 25 per cent of the total. In the big cities according to the provincial returns the proportion was even less.

But unemployment returns do not reflect very clearly the urban over-population and the difficulty of finding employment in Japanese towns. In England, for instance, the name of the man unemployed is filed by the Government official; the local corporation knows him and gives him a dole with the regularity of a salary. His union helps him, so that though out of work he is still treated as if he followed some regular profession. He is just a mason, carpenter, or docker out of work; he has many chances of finding a job similar to the one which he has left when times are better. But when a Japanese workman is out of work, all he keeps is his enrolment card. He is rarely a member of a union, his town knows nothing about him, and all he gets are brief interviews at the local Labour Exchange.

Having lost his job, he becomes a creature apart and loses all connection with a phase of life with which he has not been concerned for very long. He changes his profession and ceases to be treated as a skilled worker. Many such men from the naval arsenals became ordinary dockers after the crisis which befell that branch of industry and through which the Kobe arsenals closed down in 1927. He leaves his old home and his town. In 1924, the year after the earthquake, the population of Tokio rose considerably. From every city in Japan came not only masons and navvies, but workmen of all trades and even the unskilled. Finally

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the man out-of-work frequently makes a complete change of surroundings and leaves the town for the country, returning very often to his native village. In the planting season many unemployed set off for the ricefields, while the gathering of mulberry leaves brings a very large number of workers from the towns, from Tokio or Nagoya, who go up the valleys of Nagano or Matsoumoto. When the crisis continues, their stay in the village is prolonged accordingly.

One effect of trade depressions is an excessive insecurity of the manual labourer. A man unemployed is not shown in statistics; he drops out, irrecoverably. Then the over-population of the working classes checks the consolidation of a permanent urban proletariat, maintains this mixed element, half town, half country, typical of the beginnings of industrial revolution and the theme of complaint of Japanese economists at the end of the nineteenth century. In a word, unemployment aggravates the crisis which causes it by adding to the worker's mobility. The political problem which it presents is not as serious as in the countryside,* but it intensifies rural over-population by barring chances of work to rural labour.

Even more serious than the unemployment among the workers is lack of work for young people of the middle class. The difficulty of finding employment in the factories is perhaps only temporary; that of obtaining billets in offices or government services is chronic.

* Number of strikes in the towns; 1921, 250: 1922, 250: 1923, 260: 1924, 330

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

It is not exclusively confined to Japan. From one end of Asia to the other, in India and China, as in Japan, rises the same bitter cry of distress in the universities, secondary or public schools.

The respect shown to men of education, century after century, as if they were almost divine beings, induces far too large a number of young Asiatics in the Far East to studious pursuits. In China the award of a degree formerly secured admission to the most important government posts, in Hindu India speculative conjectures were the exclusive province of the highest class, the Brahmins, and similarly in Japan study before the Meiji Revolution was the exclusive privilege of the 'Sumurais' and monks.

When the Revolution threw open Japan for all time to the West, the young Japanese flocked to colleges and universities, all the more eagerly since the schools had formerly been aristocratic and exclusive. Western learning profited by this old esteem for study and its teachers. At the same time, a Japanese middle class arose, a class of easy circumstances, ambitious, full of reverence at once for diplomas and the new culture, so esteemed of the West. A father's ideal was to see his sons in the service of the Mikado and the success of children's education was reckoned by the number of foreign languages which they were able to speak. The ancient reverence of the East for things of the spirit and the aspirations of a new middle class sent the young Japanese to overcrowd in toilsome, intellectual careers, or, in the event of failure to pass, into subordinate government positions.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

To acquire this learning the less well-to-do Japanese often undergo the most severe privations. Many of them, in order to follow university or even school courses, are obliged to work for a livelihood during the hours set aside for study. In many cases, they go to domestic service with some wealthy family and divide their time between their studies and household duties.

Being far too numerous for this system of life Japanese children, from their earliest school days, live under the shadow of the struggle for existence. In order to pass from the primary to the secondary schools, from the latter to the higher schools and from these in turn to the universities the pupil must spend his days in the 'fitful fever' of examinations. Failure to pass left 800,000 young Japanese who had not yet qualified for university stranded unwillingly in the struggle for a livelihood.*

In spite of very severe tests the universities are overcrowded. Schools of Political Economy, of Law, or Medicine turn out annually too many lawyers without practices, doctors without patients and economists with no chances for their theories. In order to find employment for scholars who at the end of their studies do not find definite work, university groups have been formed where discussions are held, addresses delivered, perfection in a particular study attained and the unimportant details of work prepared for the professors.

Many young men of the middle classes adopt

* Only 20 per cent. of the candidates succeeded in passing into the government higher schools. In 1927 an official enquiry was held as to the position of the unsuccessful.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

business careers. Commerce or banking are no longer despised. With American influence the western ideal of the 'business man' has begun to permeate Japanese society. But in the same economic crisis which threw factory hands on to the streets, young gentlemen of the middle classes found their offices closed to them. In the financial panic of 1927 a large number of bank clerks lost their posts. Moreover, salaries in private businesses have always been on a very low scale.

The competitive examinations for government posts arouse the keenest enthusiasm. The innate respect for sovereignty, loyalty towards the monarch, the state education of the Japanese, and, above all, the esteem, the almost sacred awe inherited from China with which an official is regarded, have made these positions seem pre-eminently desirable. The Government is careful to encourage this tendency. It fears to create dreamers, intellectuals without any fixed ideas of life or occupation like the Indian or Egyptian revolutionaries.

In order to absorb a larger staff in the offices already existing, each man's work has been split up minutely. From clerks up to directors each man's duties have been scrupulously classified and restricted with the most meticulous care. Having been received by one official, a visitor is surprised to see so many people eager to await his pleasure. One man introduces him, another relieves him of his hat, while a third brings him a cup of pale tea. Should he wish to look up the records, he will find a specially-appointed trained official to deal with each heading, under each sub-title.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

He will attribute to the wish to be agreeable what is really the result of poverty. And he will probably smile at the number of titles, the crowd of directors, inspectors and controllers, of sub-inspectors and sub-controllers, whom he will meet in the realms of Japanese bureaucracy. He will suppose that the Japanese aim is to present an impressive appearance. In reality the diversity of titles conceals the same eager desire to install understudies everywhere, to find a billet for the 'black coat' out of work.

But the accumulation of staff in government departments must have its limits. The Japanese Government has been obliged on several occasions to enforce sudden reductions of staff. In 1924, for instance, 20,000 petty officials were dismissed from the public services for economy's sake. Yet the class of officials, great or small, continues to grow just the same, more and more ill paid, needier and more resentful.

This lack of employment among the brain-workers or, at any rate, this middle-class distress has aroused a serious social and political danger. Socially it has turned out a vast class of young men lacking suitable work and helpless. In the universities the haunting fear of their struggle for life dissuades promising boys from studies purely for learning's sake. All the masters at the Imperial colleges complain of this attitude. Anxiety about money has infected the prolific literature of modern novels, the theatre, the Japanese cinema, where the subject of the poor young student pining for love of the rich heiress is repeated *ad nauseam*.

Many modern novels reflect the same anxiety.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

One is called *The Poor Scholar of Science*, another whose hero is a student, *The Demon of Gold*, a third, entitled *The Storm*, has for its chief characters a father and mother whose one thought is of their children's future. One of the principal characters in a recent novel, *Haru*, is a youth, formerly a student, who ruins his chances of life by changing his career, passing from the profession of letters and arts to manual labour and back again. A recent work, *A Competitor's Diary*, tells us of the misfortunes of a young lover whom his lady love refuses, because he has failed so many times in his examinations and who in despair finally kills himself.* Suicide in the ancient manner of hara-kiri is to-day a very rare occurrence, but suicides of young intellectuals are rapidly on the increase.

Politically this discontented element breeds revolutionaries. Once freed from the very strict discipline of school, strikes of students frequently break out. At the university the students are passionately addicted to politics and in spite of all repressive efforts the theories of Karl Marx are making rapid progress at Tokyo.

Their influence even infects the countrysides. Many of them having no work to do, leave the town and set off to organise groups of peasants in the villages, incite farmers to refuse payment of rent and defend them in the law court against the landlord. In the south-west districts of Japan these advocates down from the universities are legion. Through them

* These titles are listed in the *Bulletin de la Maison Franco-Japonaise*, ii. Tokio, 1927.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

western ideas of equality spread even to remote country provinces. Through their influence agitation in the country has been linked up with that of the town. At Tokio, outside their classroom, lazy students foregather in taverns and bars dressed like western artists, moved on by the police ostensibly because of their bad morals, but really because they are suspected of political plots. The political associations which they form are, as a rule, much more violent than workmen's syndicates, which were inaugurated under the peaceful inspiration of the Protestant Missions. A great number of students without prospects were compromised in the plot which the Government put down with great severity in the spring of 1928.

CHAPTER II

THE REMEDIES FOR OVER-POPULATION

The Japanese dislike of emigration – Bitter resentment of American Emigration Acts – Government encourages emigration – Birth Control – Economic remedies: agricultural development – Neglect of pasture lands – Industrialization – Scarcity of the raw materials.

Not a single day passes on which economists, politicians or journalists of Japan do not urge their own special solutions of the problem of over-population. These are of two kinds (1) to check increase in population; (2) to develop production. The first is the concern of the people in general, the second is economic.

Emigration overseas seems, at first sight, the simplest and most effective remedy. After the signature of the Treaty of Portsmouth the whole world expected to see masses of Japanese instantly swarm upon Manchuria. For the last twenty-five years Japanese influence has been predominant there, yet despite the natural resources and favourable climate during that period scarcely 100,000 Japanese have entered the country.

Though they have made almost a fetish of naturalization, the proportion of Japanese, even in the colonies near their own shores, is small, namely, $2\frac{1}{4}$ per cent

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

of the whole population in Corea and $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in Formosa.* It is by no means certain that these countries can support additional inhabitants to any great extent. The fact that many Corean peasants leave the Peninsula to settle in Manchuria or Japan seems to prove a lack of opportunities in their own country.

The untilled lands of Hokkaido, with their good climate and fertile soil, take some thousands of colonists every year, thanks to the very active propaganda of the Japanese Government. But these colonists almost always settle inland. As a matter of fact the Japanese himself does not go to live in his own colonies. In some of them he dreads the tropical climate which he can scarcely stand, and in none does he adapt himself readily to the new conditions, refusing to accept a reduced standard of living. In every one he has to compete ineffectively with the more energetic Chinese, content with little at the beginning of his undertakings, though actually more ambitious.

Thus he is usually driven from his own colonies by the Chinese and wherever he goes as a foreigner, he will meet with the same treatment even more frequently. In Asia, excluding the colonies and Manchuria, the number of Japanese settlers scarcely exceeds 80,000.

Whether he be a peasant or a coolie, the subject of the Mikado is too much occupied with appearances and too deeply absorbed in thinking of the part he is playing in society to consent to live the Chinaman's

* In 1926 there were in Corea 442,225 Japanese and in Formosa 195,770.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

laborious, homely existence, to endure changing fortunes and adventures before attaining success. When overseas, even chance contact with his yellow competitor distresses him as something degrading. For though there still runs in his blood a feeling of respect for the old Empire, when he rubs shoulders with the Chinese he feels all the scorn of a civilised man for the savage.

A consciousness of his own superiority prevents him from becoming acclimatized among the masses which he despises. At the very thought of working with the natives of the Asiatic continent, he is at once conscious of much the same repulsion as an American would feel if set to work among men of colour.

There was no mass movement of Japanese to the United States and the British Empire even before the former had closed her harbours to the yellow race and the Dominions had not begun to enforce their policy of excluding coloured peoples. In 1927 there were scarcely more than 140,000 Japanese residing in America. Hawaii alone contained the fairly high total of 260,000; peasants who had settled on the sugar cane plantations where they came as coolies and who often have now their own farms or even estates, former artisans, workers, or small shopkeepers who have been successful in investing their savings – a society firmly established like a kingdom of its own, whose domain is not extended any longer by new arrivals. Until 1880 emigration was negligible; from 1900 to 1925 it had not reached the average of 12,000 individuals.* The American law has been resented as an outrage

* See Ferenczi *International Migrations*. Vol. I. "Japan," pp. 338, 339.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

against nations and its political importance cannot be too strongly emphasised. The passions which it has aroused have grown in deep-rooted hatreds. The American assertion of inequality of races has not been looked upon merely as a conflict between one state and another. It has infuriated every Japanese as a personal insult. As a matter of fact the results, as far as the shifting of peoples was concerned, were not serious.*

There remains South America, possibly the future home of Japanese emigrants. She has not yet attracted them to her shores in any considerable numbers; in 1927 in the whole country there were only 90,000 Japanese.

Their settlement in the lands of the southern hemisphere is of quite recent date. The stream that bears them to South America is perhaps the same which bore them to Hawaii or California, but diverted from its original course through American restrictions. Only Brazil offers emigrants any prospects worth considering. The organizing of immigrants has been for many years a State undertaking with the collaboration of the steamship companies. Ever since the War the Japanese Government has endeavoured, with growing activity, to assist the movement.

It has voted large credits as advances to applicants to meet part of the cost of travel and appointed in various districts co-operative emigration societies, whose members receive loans and land. It dispatches

* In 1927 the number of Japanese settlers was 140,710 in U.S. and 21,160 in Canada.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

lecturers to the villages and displays films to encourage the destitute to set forth. There again the result has not amounted to much, only 8,000 emigrants leaving for Brazil in 1926. Such displacements, on so small a scale, at long intervals and in small sections, are very far from the vast hordes of emigrants pictured by theorists of the Yellow Peril. Only 600,000 Japanese altogether live overseas, not even the equivalent of the annual increase in their population. In 1926 only 16,000 emigrated.

But a survey of those territories in Japan from which almost exclusively emigrants have come, show the superficial character of the movement far more clearly than any figures.

These lie to the south west; the inland province of Okinawa, Hiroshima and Yamagouchi on the Inland Sea, and the district of Koumamoto as far as Kiou-Siou, although relatively less densely populated than the others, have been the only districts to reach a total of 1,000 emigrants in 1926.

In all those provinces, mainly inhabited by fishermen and small farmers, emigrants only come from villages quite close to the coast. The case of the province of Hiroshima, the original home of the majority of the emigrants to California and Hawaii, is a typical example. It is only in the coastal villages that houses are to be seen more well to do and newer in appearance, their pine beams gleaming with a dazzling brilliancy. These are usually the homes of emigrants grown rich overseas. Higher up in the valley villages such houses are scarcely ever to be found. The desire to leave the

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

land has not penetrated so far from the coast. Emigration is still in its first stage on which only those embark who have been long familiar with the sea or sojourned long on the coast, so that their minds have turned to the idea of a long journey.

The first emigrants from Hiroshima were fishermen who at the beginning of the Meiji Era set off on a journey of many stages to settle overseas.

The first landmen who shortly afterwards embarked came from the same districts as these fishermen; they were destitute farmers who did not go willingly, but through agreements made with the planters in the Hawaii Islands who wanted them. Then various companies and government agencies undertook to collect emigrants, until 1908, when the American laws restricted the right to reside in the United States to relatives of emigrants or returning emigrants. It was, in short, a local exodus and hardly a spontaneous movement. But in the province of Hiroshima economic conditions are the most favourable for emigration; in it are a great number of landowners, such men, being more independent than tenants, making more suitable emigrants. Their average properties are the smallest in the Empire and most of them emigrated inland. But even in Hiroshima the stream of emigrants has never been comparable to that proceeding from European districts.

Indeed the Japanese knows nothing of, and declines to take any interest in, emigration. When he leaves his village, he maintains such close relationships that it is easy to anticipate his return in the near

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

future. The money earned on American plantations serves to build those more pretentious houses so noticeable in emigrants' villages, or to purchase lands which will be leased to tenant farmers until the owners decide to cultivate them personally. The departed Japanese keeps closely in touch in every way with his native country. The tiny stream of Japanese emigrants has always been a family affair, quite the reverse of the Chinese, which until recently was chiefly one of individuals. Husband, wife and children leave together for overseas. As soon as they can, they will return to the land of their birth. But they have always members of their family, old parents, brothers or sisters, who have remained at home and who upbraid them with their exile as an act of treachery.

In their propaganda to encourage emigration to South America, the Government is at pains to show, in cinema films, the close resemblance between life on the plantation and in the native village. In order to make this policy effective it has to flatter the tastes of those to whom it is addressed. For some years past most of the boys and girls in the schools of southern Japan have seen on the screen, interspersed with comments from a government lecturer, the most alluring pictures of country life in Brazil. Sometimes with a very simple plot the pictures are shown in a continuous story; the audience witnesses the exile of peasant and wife far from the land of their ancestors and their too restricted ricefield. But on the coffee plantation of Brazil, as shown by the operator, in the little wooden hut exactly like those of Japan and over

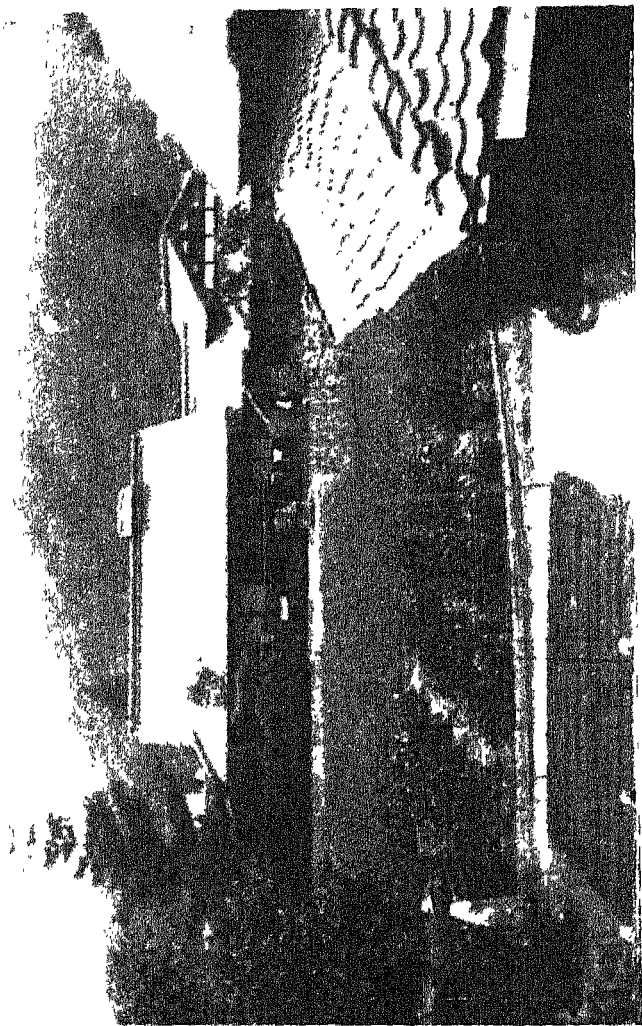


Photo E. Denner,

PEASANTS' HOMESTEADS IN HIROSHIMA

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

which floats the flag of their country, life continues exactly the same as at home. According to the film, their fortune once made, the family comes home again to the ricefield in the village, the tomb of their ancestors, and the little house bright with wisteria and the cherry tree in bloom.

The Japanese have always maintained their insular habits more zealously even than the English. But England has always been the country open to trade and adventure; at each period of stress its inhabitants have emigrated. Japan, on the other hand, has relied upon her position as an island to turn back to her own territory. No past traditions of travel have begun to stir in her breast. Now that the island is open to all, her men refuse to leave it. Reduced to the sea coasts of three or four provinces, with no impulse from the past, no eagerness, hemmed in by the restrictions of foreigners, Japanese emigration is a factor of no particular importance. It is an easier task for a government to export her merchandise than to force her men to go and settle overseas. Japan has had to suffer for her action in shutting herself off for two centuries from outside influences. The habit of emigration is not to be acquired in a few years.

Since they cannot send their surplus population elsewhere, do the Japanese consider restricting its increase by artificial means? The problem of birth control has been raised officially, and that means a good deal in this country where worship of the family is practised as a sacred and patriotic duty. In August,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

1927, the Prime Minister, Baron Tanaka, announced that the practice of restriction of births, despite its apparent advantages, was not to be permitted. But the fact remains that the question had been raised officially.

Early in 1929 the problem was even brought before the Japanese Diet. On the initiative of Mr. Tsao Abe and the leaders of the democratic parties, it was proposed to recognize the common sense of birth control, to permit the practice of abortion within the first three months, and even to afford facilities in cases of the mother's ill health. Naturally the project fell through, but at any rate the question had been publicly discussed.

The mass of opinion in Japan is evidently hostile to this solution. In the autumn of 1926, an important Tokio review, the *Taiyo*, asked the opinion of most of the leading personages of Japan. It requested them to reply to these two questions: 'Is birth control desirable in an over-populated nation?' 'Is birth control desirable in Japan?' Out of nearly a hundred replies there were not more than six or seven in the affirmative to the second question, and a dozen to the first. They came from professors of political economy in universities, idealists infatuated with western civilisation, or from two or three representatives of unions. But most of the correspondents sent an unhesitating negative. Politicians, business men, and officials are especially emphatic in their views. Most of them answered in the name of national man power. 'Restricting birth rates means the decline of patriotism,' or 'The Japanese

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

nation is the third in the world. She owes it to the vitality of her peoples,' or again 'The population of Japan must reach a total of one hundred millions of men.' Foreign influences are sometimes violently denounced. 'Only American or Russian spies could suggest control of births,' says a Member of Parliament. And another proclaims, 'Above all let us not follow the example of France! Let us keep our strength unimpaired!' The arguments of religion are not neglected; 'To control birth is a sin,' declares a Buddhist monk, 'for ancestors are entitled to the good deeds of many descendants.'

So the Japanese still prefer the evil to the remedy; they complain of their over-population, and yet are proud of their numbers. They perceive the dangers of the one, but proclaim the glorious need of the other.

If the rate of increase of the populace cannot be slackened, Japan's only course is a rapid development in production. Increase of agricultural products would enable more inhabitants to be fed. A larger industrial output would have the same effect; it would enable food supplies to be imported without upsetting the balance of trade and facilitate their exchange for manufactured articles. Moreover further opportunities of work would perhaps be open to the unemployed.

For a people mainly living in the country, is not the remedy to be found in agriculture? Does Japan now yield the maximum of her productive powers? In order to diminish the supply of imported foodstuffs,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

to raise the level of living of a nation who mainly are of the peasant class, is it not possible to increase the returns of the soil and further extend the acreage under cultivation?

As we have seen, the returns from Japanese soil, ever since the Meiji Revolution, have been on the up grade. And it will doubtless be no easy task to obtain from the ricefield much more rice than it actually produces. But on the ancestral ricefield there is room for many improvements. The Japanese Minister of Agriculture has had under consideration, ever since the outbreak of the War, a great number of methods to intensify returns; according to his anticipations these might be increased by more than 20 per cent.* All that need be done would be to adopt more *scientific processes, select the grains more carefully*, encourage rotation of crops, and improve the nurseries on the ricefields. Fertilizing would have to be more commonly adopted, and above all, the nitrogenized products be replaced by vegetable fertilizing, since these imported in large quantities affect the balance of trade so unfavourably.

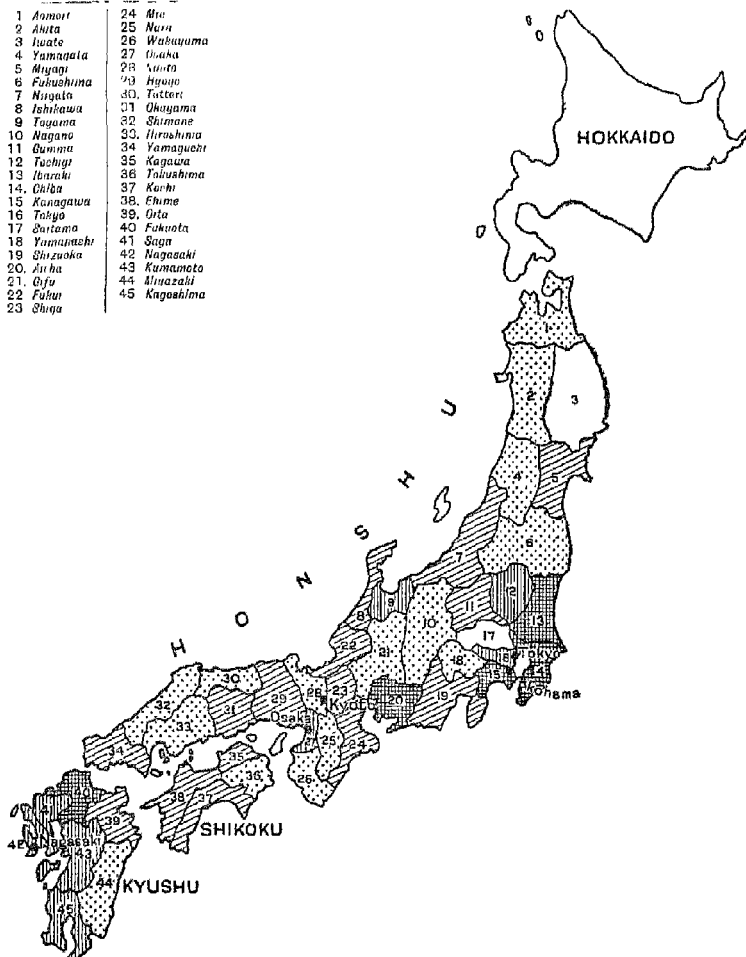
But real progress does not consist so much in intensifying cultivation as in extending it. For that purpose it is not necessary, as some authorities have asserted, to embark upon such costly and perhaps fantastic schemes as subjugating the sea, to build sand bars over half the Bay of Tokio†, or to make a second

* From 1.89 to 2.4.

† The Yasuda and Asano Co. was formed with a capital of 100 million yen for this purpose.

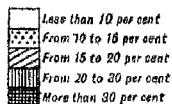
Reference to Prefectures

1	Aomori	24	Mie
2	Akita	25	Nara
3	Iwate	26	Wakayama
4	Yamanashi	27	Osaka
5	Miyagi	28	Tokyo
6	Fukushima	29	Igawa
7	Niigata	30	Tokushima
8	Tohoku	31	Okayama
9	Yamagata	32	Shimane
10	Nagano	33	Hiroshima
11	Gumma	34	Yamaguchi
12	Techigi	35	Kagawa
13	Ibaraki	36	Tokushima
14	Chiba	37	Kure
15	Kanagawa	38	Fukuoka
16	Tokyo	39	Oita
17	Saitama	40	Fukuoka
18	Yamaguchi	41	Saga
19	Shizuoka	42	Nagasaki
20	Aichi	43	Kumamoto
21	Oifu	44	Miyazaki
22	Fukuoka	45	Kagoshima
23	Shiga		



JAPAN--AGRICULTURE

Percentage of the Total Area which is under cultivation



ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Holland of the Empire of the Rising Sun. Much the better course is first to utilise all the lands now lying waste.

The greatest number of new soils to be forced to yield to human effort are to be found in Hokkaïdo. Lying quite close to Hondo, the island is really part of Japan proper, though under a different administration. Ever since the beginning of the century the Japanese have based high expectations on the possibilities of this hilly land, as yet so little exploited, with its doubtless boisterous and greatly varying climate, but where summers are very warm and favourable, to cultivation in the lowlands and river valleys. In spite of its high latitude they have laid out new ricefields in the south of the island. Fields of beans, wheat, and beetroot, are gradually extending as the forest is cleared. From the years 1914 to 1920 nearly 450,000 acres have been brought into cultivation. During the same period the population of the island has nearly doubled. But now progress in colonizing does not seem so rapid there as in the other Japanese provinces — scarcely 6 per cent. Even in this island so close to his own shores the Japanese does not feel at home. The wide vista of the Yezo Mountains makes him yearn for his narrow valleys, his closely confined plains and friendly countryside. Little wooden huts are beginning to give way to stone-built houses. The careful tending of the tiny ricefield has gone; the Japanese peasant must adapt himself to extensive workings on larger estates, in which he feels himself lost. But the rapid development of Hokkaïdo to-day depends solely upon the labour and capital employed. Although of late it

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

is being colonized less rapidly the Island contains an immense reserve of land and wealth which Japan will decide to develop more energetically in the near future. The Empire's output of foodstuffs would thus be increased.

Central and Northern Japan still contain vast undeveloped acreages which could be utilised to grow rice. In the south-east, in the districts of Hondo, are lands suitable for rice sowing. The Japanese are aware of this fact. When the War broke out, a law was voted to bring back to cultivation untilled acreages; it was framed to allow for the development, within ten years, of over half a million acres of new land. Cultivators who reclaimed more than 15 acres were remitted 40 per cent of their expenses. According to the figures and calculations of those who drew up the scheme nearly 9,000,000 acres can still be made productive, 2,500,000 of which can be turned into ricefields. During the last ten years, however, the ricefield acreage has only extended very slightly.

Between 1917 and 1926 it increased only 2 per cent of its total acreage. Since the War the peasants have preferred to grow the mulberry tree, the returns from which for many years were excellent, but suddenly decreased in 1923. But the statements in Japanese statistics are quite positive; much new land can be still cultivated even in the inland districts. For the time being, it is a strange fact that Japan, the country where the density of the population on arable land is the greatest in the world, is of all the great powers under development, the one in which the proportion of arable

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

land is the lowest; only 15 per cent of the land is under cultivation, whereas in England, in spite of industrial revolutions and extensions of pastures, the proportion is 25 per cent. In addition to her cultivated area England has also her pasture lands, whereas Japan neglects her own. Yet she possesses an interior unusually favourable to cattle rearing, vast grassy slopes down mountain sides. But the Asiatic does not know how to utilise such districts. Flocks are not numerous in Japan, animals being used almost exclusively for transport rather than consumption. The climate, with its heavy rains, more regularly distributed throughout the year than in the countries of ordered monsoons, and its more moderate temperature, does not present such serious difficulties for cattle raising as do India and South China. Moreover, in Japan Buddhism has not sufficient influence to forbid meat as food. If her rural resources are to be worked profitably, Japan will have to turn her attention to the mountains. In England pasture lands were extended at the expense of lands under cultivation. In Japan too, this can be effected in vast territories still untilled. New systems will have to be introduced, by which the mountain lands can be exploited and the whole interior of the country made to serve for pasture. Japan has no need to seek much of her agricultural machinery from the West, for it would be of no use in the tiny, sub-divided ricefields. But she will have to be taught by the West all the processes which create wealth from vast empty tracks of land.

Japan may feel every confidence in her future from

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the development of her agriculture, the cultivating of new districts and turning into pasture, regions as yet untilled. The extensions of her agriculture, thanks to western skill and methods, may succeed in diminishing the evils of population more effectively than any other remedy and, though still long and costly, are doubtless the simplest solutions of the problem. Yet the Japanese of to-day talks far more frequently of industry as the real cure of his troubles.

For several years industrialization has been the popular remedy. In 1927 a commission was appointed to deal with the critical state of food supplies and overpopulation. 'Let us industrialize the nation,' said the Prime Minister of Japan, Baron Tanaka, at the first meeting.

Such a task, however, is difficult. In the first place Japanese authorities seem to assert that the development of the leading industries will afford excellent openings to workers in the countryside. But no prospect is less certain. Even during the most rapid economic development of the Empire, the demand for manual labour did not increase in the same proportion. Between 1913 and 1921, a period of unprecedented prosperity, the number of machine-workers increased by 600,000, while handworkers decreased by merely 300,000.* At any rate, industry in Japan is still too unimportant a factor to solve

* See Uyehara *The Industry and Trade of Japan* (1926); the *Japan Advertiser* (1928-29); K. Yamasaki and J. Ogawa, *The Effect of the World War upon the Commerce and Industry of Japan* (1929).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

by any normal development the problem of manual labour.

But industry can find a very different remedy for the ills of over-population. By improving export figures and reducing imports it can diminish the disastrous effect on the balance of trade caused by imported foodstuffs. In exchange for its rice the Empire will be able to sell abroad its manufactured articles or raw material.

This remedy however will be long in proving effective. For many reasons Japan is outclassed in her dealings with her European and American rivals; during the War she improved her position, but now that Peace is established her troubles have recurred.

Japanese industry, still in its youth, now meets with serious obstacles. Booklets and advertisement lists in English, broadcast annually from Japan to Europe or America, or diagrams skilfully worked out, in which the curves of productions and sales are shown by lines continually rising, give the foreigner a singularly false idea of the Empire's immediate economic prospects. Her difficulties are of many kinds, due to the character of the Japanese people, her soil and her neighbours. They fall chiefly into three classes: the indifferent quality of manual labour, scarcity of raw materials and instability of markets.

With regard to manual labour, there is certainly no lack of supply, for the demand for work always exceeds the amount available, but the Japanese workers' actual value is still inferior, for he has not yet acquired the westerner's skill. Even the best-trained men lack

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

tradition and experience. To import machines from the United States may have been possible, but the skill in handling them and concentrated activity of the American workmen, could not be imported. A man does not remain at his trade for a long enough period. Crises in industry contribute, as we have seen, to the instability of manual labour, which in turn retards the development of the industry. As in most countries where machinery has only recently been imported, owners and managers reckon too much on the machine and too little on the skill of those who work it. The large proportion of women employed in Japanese industry is typical of this train of thought; in the factories they outnumber the men. More than a quarter of them are under sixteen years of age, and many only go to work in factories until their marriage and then at once return to live on the ricefields in their husbands' villages. So high an average of female labour appears strange in a country administered on modern lines. For a parallel case we should have to go to those other countries in Asia recently conquered by machinery, such as India or China.*

Payment is lower in Japan than in America or Europe. The workman's cost per head, calculated on his output, is much higher. For the same piece of work as would be done elsewhere more workers are required, a fact which is mainly answerable for the high price of the Japanese manufactured article.

As regards Japanese spinning mills a recent report

* In 1926 the population was 48.7 per cent men; 51.3 per cent women, while 23.5 per cent of the latter were under 16 years of age.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

of the Cotton Yarn Association of Manchester states that in 1926 the number of workers required for a thousand spindles is $15\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, whereas in Lancashire it is only 6 per cent. Whereas payment in England is half as high again as in Japan, the cost of production in the spinning mills of Manchester is only two-thirds of that in Osaka.

In a statement made to commend the progress of national industries, the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Tokugoro Nakahashi, quotes an example which, in his view, is particularly encouraging: 'Among the most remarkable proofs of the progress of our industry, let me quote the position of the State steel yards at Edamitsou. Production there has increased annually, and far more rapidly than the amount of steam power, or the number of workmen required. . . . In 1920, when the total number of working hours was at 4,933,470, the steel yards produced 297,369 tons of steel. In 1928, for an output of 337,153 tons, the number of working hours had not exceeded 5,690,857 . . . The management has succeeded in reducing the cost of steel per ton to 135.5 yen. Now the cost of a ton of steel in America is 100 yen. We must attain the standard of price of the West.* So then, in a case which is particularly favourable, one that deserved to be selected as good propaganda, the cost of production in Japan was more than a third higher than in America.

In course of time, the Japanese may well expect to see the question of their manual labour settled. But

* *Japan Advertiser*, June 22nd, 1929.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

time can only serve to aggravate the second of her industry's difficulties, the scarcity of raw materials.

We have purposely confined our observations to this scarcity. The other great scarcity in the Japanese system of economy might also be emphasized, viz., that of steam power. But this is not an expensive item in the country's balance-sheet. Imports of coal are limited, and on an average are scarcely more than exports. But there is no modern country consuming less coal per unit of population than Japan. And, although the annual output is little, coal reserves within the Empire, according to the experts, would be exhausted in less than two centuries.* But for the time being the Japanese have managed to be self-supporting in coal. They have replaced the deficiency in steam power by an ample supply of water power.

Owing to her mountains and her rainfall Japan is abundantly supplied with torrents, waterfalls and cascades. From these bubbling and countless waters, of which native poets have sung through all history, the engineer has drawn one of the main sources of the country's wealth. The electric power at present utilised in Japan exceeds her steam power by nearly one half. More than two million kilowatts were supplied in 1927 by hydro-electric companies. Installations under construction in the same year are calculated to supply nearly 1,800,000 kilowatts. Though lacking in fuel, Japan – at any rate in the near future – will not have to suffer from this defect. The motive

* Reserves are estimated at 9,000,000,000 tons, only half of which can be worked under present mining system.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

power at her disposal will long suffice for the needs of her production. A much more disquieting factor is the scarcity of raw materials. Of all those used in Japanese factories, silk is almost the only product of the country itself. All the others have to be obtained from abroad, and Japan, with a power of purchase frequently inferior, has to compete in the fierce struggle of the nations to acquire raw material.

Cotton, the first and foremost industry of Japan both in the quantity and value of output and the number of hands employed, is entirely imported from overseas. India and America, China and Egypt land their cargoes in Japanese ports. India and the United States are the chief purveyors of Japanese cotton goods; up to the present time India headed the list, but the peasant in the Indian cotton plantation keeps back an annually growing proportion of his crops for the Bombay factories. The British colony retains for its own workshops an even larger part. Japanese spinners have been obliged to rely more extensively on America. In 1914 the United States exported to Japan only a quarter* of her total cotton crop, whereas in 1927 it was nearly the half. Moreover American cotton is of superior quality to the Indian, hence the Japanese product has a further advantage. But the price of raw material is rising and the trade balance of Japan is consequently more heavily burdened.

The poorness of her soil in minerals is an even

* See the *Cotton Statistics of Japan* (1903-27), published by the Japan Cotton Spinners' Association, Osaka. Also W. B. Cunningham, *Report on the Cotton Spinning and Weaving Industry in Japan* (1927).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

greater misfortune to Japan than her scarcity of cotton. The iron and steel trades, on which all the others must be dependent, are exposed to a formidable handicap. In the islands proper the quantity of minerals extracted in 1927 was below 160,000 tons. No other great industrial country has so negligible an output. China is the chief importer into Japan of iron ore. In the ultimatum despatched in 1915 to the Chinese Republic, the Government of Tokio in one of its twenty-one demands, insisted upon the control of the mines on the Yantsé river banks. The necessity of retaining the coal mines of Manchuria is, as will be seen, one of the reasons for Japan's political activity in those provinces. Besides iron ore Japan imports a great quantity of tin. If she seems to neglect the continent of Asia and turns to America for her cotton, on the other hand she seeks her requirements in tin in Asia rather than elsewhere. Owing to the extension of the Tata factories India supplies the largest quantities of Japanese tin, America and Europe securing the next places, but only for steel, for Japan is obliged to import more than two-fifths of the steel that she requires. Most of the machinery employed in industries is not made in Japan, but also comes from America. In the event of war the Mikado's Empire would be entirely dependent on foreign supplies. The very framework of Japanese industries comes from overseas.

If Japan has to contend with foreign rivals for raw materials, still more acute is her competition with them in securing markets. When the difficulties of pro-

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

duction are overcome, there will always remain that of marketing. Working at high costs, the Japanese is seriously handicapped by foreign powers in the selling of his goods.

Only in her export of silk can she face the situation with more confidence. Exported in the form of raw silk, it is not subjected to the usual rise in price of Japanese manufactured articles. Its value was estimated in 1927 at 37 per cent of the total of Japanese exports. The American purchaser dumps it down in his *entrepôts*. Of the raw silk exported 94 per cent found its way to the United States. But since 1929 these exports have fallen very considerably and in 1930 their value declined by 50 per cent. In the American market artificial silk is a dangerous and growing rival. In this struggle between the Japanese small silk grower and the great foreign manufacturer it is by no means certain that the former will prove victorious. Advance in modern processes will assist them both, but undoubtedly the second rather than the first.

Beside raw silks, cottons are the chief export of Japan. Cotton goods suffer from the high cost of their manufacture. They cannot compete with those from Europe or America in their own spheres. Japan has to make up for high costs of production by low freight charges, and take advantage of being situated near markets from which other producers are separated by vast distances. The natural market for Japan is Asia. The peoples of China and India, whose requirements have increased under outside influences, are the

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Japanese cotton exporters' best customers; in 1927 they took more than 54 per cent of their exported cotton goods. In clothing the destitute hordes of boundless Asia, Osaka is becoming a serious rival of Manchester. Japanese industry might even profit from the decline in the British industry to oust her from the continent.

But the rivalry for these vast markets is not confined to the great importing countries. The native is becoming a formidable competitor. China and especially India produce cotton goods on the spot. On their own soils they have more means for steam power than Japan. The fierce spirit of Nationalism which stirs the people throughout the land against the foreigner is as injurious to the Japanese manufacturer as to the Anglo-Saxon. Hatred of the foreigner drives the native, often against his own interest, to refuse to buy imported goods. Gandhi in his campaign against foreign cottons considers the Japanese as identical with the English. In China an active propaganda has frequently been started against Japanese imports. In consequence of Japanese intervention in China, either by troops or diplomatically, after the Ultimatum of 1915 and the Twenty-one Demands by Japan, or more recently after the occupation of Tsinan-Fou and Manchuria by their troops, the boycott that originated in Canton, Peking, or Mudkin, spread in a few days throughout the whole of China. The years visited by such outbursts are fatal to Japanese industry. In 1928, for instance, their exports of cotton clothing to China proper fell to about 25 per cent below the average of

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the previous three years.* Finally, future prospects are even more threatening than these passing storms. As the result of a clamorous agitation specially violent in the industrial centres of Bombay, India has put a tariff on cotton goods imported from Japan. And China, too, was able to induce her government, who had long objected to such a course, to enforce protective tariffs on a still higher scale and that in spite of the desperate campaigns of the Kansai manufacturers.

In order to alleviate these recent dangers, Japanese industry is beginning to adopt a new method. It has begun to manufacture in the markets which it wishes to conquer. It has established mills in the centre of China; the total of its spindles in Central China already exceeds those in native mills. The workman of the conceded territories, who in his hatred of the foreigner refuses to purchase Japanese goods, is quite capable of refusing also to produce them. Violent strikes broke out after the occupation of Tsinan-Fou in the Japanese factories of Shanghai. The Chinese worker is a strong individualist and when excited by feelings of hostility quickly turns to pillaging.

Yet the number of Japanese spindles and weaving machinery in China continues to increase. The Japanese is eager to acquire the vast Chinese market, not only on the coast, but also inland, by setting up his factories in the heart of the Republic and even controlling the finances of a great number of Chinese factories.

The industrialization of the country is thus to-day

* From 132,165,000 yards in 1927 to 48,554,000 yards.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

one of the chief pre-occupations of the Japanese government. This is to be effected by tariffs and even subsidies* granted to the producers. The Government has not refrained from intervening in industrial problems. But difficulties in industry do not depend only on laws, but are due to Japan's island position, her peoples and diplomacy. They can only be overcome by a change in the workers' psychology, by successful deals with countries rich in raw material, and by overcoming the enmity of important customers in Asia and the competition of her great rivals in Europe and America.

Industrialization cannot be effected as speedily in the future as it has been in the past. A policy of over-haste in a country mainly rural would bring in its train all the disasters of extensive economic changes introduced too quickly. But its development is very necessary to Japan with her dense population, if she is to secure foodstuffs in exchange for her manufactured articles.

Will the troubles due to Japan's over-population grow daily more serious or is it only a crisis, doubtless dangerous, but only of a temporary character, a legacy of her sudden economic revolution, fifty years overdue, and which will diminish as that recedes into the realms of the past?

The possibility that it will increase to the danger of the whole state has much to support it, but western

* In 1926 the Diet voted the steelworkers subsidies ranging from 3 to 6 yen per ton.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

influence, whose adoption was the cause of the trouble, may, by becoming definitely prevalent, provide a cure. Western skill may develop the wealth of the Empire, increase, in the towns, the output of manual worker and machine in the country bring more fields under cultivation, and stock the hill sides with flocks and herdsmen. In short, eliminate under-development as a cause of over-population.

But the needs which western civilization creates will no doubt act as the main deterrent in the astounding prolificity of the Japanese people. The birth-rate will doubtless cease to rise with the rapidity of recent years. The first stage, that of the sudden economic development of Japan, of visions of boundless prosperity, seems to be over, but at the same time the desire for a higher standard of living is more prevalent. The peasant, who used to feed on barley or millet, now asks for rice. His children want the clothes and amusements of town life. Means of livelihood may have decreased, but eagerness to get rich continues. It is probable that some years hence the birth-rate will decrease. The proportion of marriages during the past ten years is already reduced and the birth-rate should fall simultaneously. The Japanese seem to have an overpowering objection to birth control, but whether they wish it or not, they will have to submit to a decline in their prolificity.

The problem is not ripe for complete settlement in all its aspects, nor can it be solved without difficulty. For, far from diminishing, the danger is actually growing and is a source of anxiety to her neighbours

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

as deep as to Japan herself. It is the nation itself and its government that are in immediate danger. Voices of discontent are muttering throughout the islands. Thwarted aspirations or simply wretched living conditions foster rebellion. In the country, farmers rise up, join issue with the landlords and over their heads with the Government. In the towns, more formidable than the working classes who are badly organized and unable to take up a stand, are the young intelligensia, eager to agitate, at present powerless, but already making their voices heard. The foundations of the State are less secure than her outward appearance suggests. The rapid growth of her population is regarded by the Japanese as a great source of strength, but it has brought into the world so many grumblers and, above all, so many unemployables that, even from the point of material power, it may well be asked if they will not one day recognise it as a source of weakness.

It is also a danger for the other powers. These need not fear invasions by fire and sword of Japanese armies nor even an endless peaceful penetration through swarms of aliens. A shifting of Japanese eastward in any formidable numbers to the coasts of America, or southward to Australia, so empty and untilled, is not a prospect likely to be realized, at any rate in the near future.

To improve her present financial position Japan must again turn to the vast continent which lies just beyond her own shores. For the last sixty years every intellectual and moral evolution has impelled Japan to

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

turn away from China and India; but now economic forces are reuniting her, more closely than ever, to the continent of Asia. Her whole existence depends upon her more or less effective control over their products, work and requirements.

The foodstuffs, without which she cannot live, come from her own colonies, from Burma, India, Java, and the East Indies; the raw materials, cotton or iron, the vast markets in which she must take the lead in order to develop her trade – Japan will find all these indispensable sources of trade in Asia. The very fact that China or India are over-populated, by providing new customers, opens out new prospects to the over-populated Japan. Japanese aspirations in Asia, especially in China, do not alter with the governments. The moderate policy of President Hamagushi could succeed the 'positive' policy of Baron Tanaka. Economic control of China has become absolutely necessary for Japan. Thereby her over-population has become a real source of danger for the foreigner. To her rivals, the western powers, the designs of Japan in Asia, and especially in China, are an endless cause of conflict.

The more acutely Japan is conscious of increasing difficulties within, the more obstinate is her attitude towards the world without. There is always the fear that her population will impel the Empire of the Rising Sun to expand at the expense of her neighbours, who have not yet attained, as she has, a national unity, and so cause indirectly future conflict in the Pacific.

PART II

THE EXPANSION OF CHINA

CHAPTER III

THE CHINAMAN ABROAD

Vast numbers of Chinese emigrants—Overcrowded and desolate territories—Government attitude towards emigration—Types of emigrants.

‘HAPPY are the people who live in a country so close to each other that they can hear their neighbours’ cock crow or their dogs bark, but who, through all their lives, have nothing to do with them.’*

This ideal of life as defined by Lao Tse, with the little family household as its base, independent and closely confined, should have kept the villagers of China rooted to their native soil. And yet the greatest displacements of the Asiatic peoples have originated in the Central Empire. If to-day the thought of a Yellow Peril, of continents invaded by millions of coloured men, stirs certain people’s imagination, only in the teeming, over-populated Chinese Republic can such forebodings be justified. Whilst the waves of Japanese masses are borne back upon themselves in their narrow islands, those of boundless China go swarming forth beyond seas and oceans. Scarcely more than 600,000 Japanese live outside their own Empire, while at least 8,000,000 Chinese live far from the Republic.

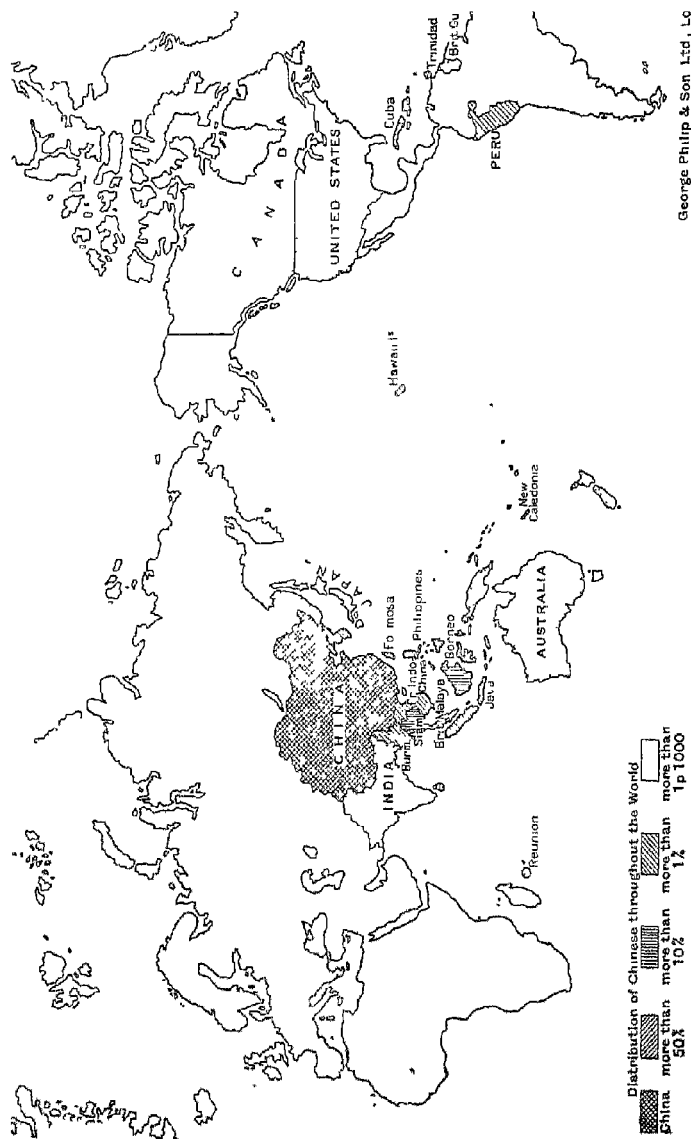
* Ta Chen *Chinese Migrations* (U.S.A. Bureau of Labour Statistics, No. 340).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

All the lands in the Pacific and Indian Oceans still open to them are gradually becoming Chinese. If we want to know the countries to which the Chinese wends his way, we have only to ascertain those which are not yet closed to him.

America, Hawaii, Australia, and South Africa are practically barred to this great current of humanity. A close ring of countries, where the white man is supreme, on the shores of the oceans which face Asia checks the swarm of Chinese, but within this vast bend the countries are over-run with them. Southern Asia, Burma, the Malay Peninsula, Java, and Indo-China admit annually hundreds of thousands of the inhabitants of Kouang-Tong or Foukien. Homely-looking junks, laden to their utmost capacity, bring emigrants from Hong-Kong or Amoi to Formosa or the Philippines. Farther on the great stream sweeps, like some human whirlwind, into the islands of Oceania, while beyond the American continents, into the distant Antilles, come still more workers from China. Every occupation, every aspiration is reflected in this mass of humanity; coolies and merchants, peasants and workmen, artisans, planters, miners, even adventurers, their employment varying according to chance or the conditions in which they find themselves. Human beings even more varied than in China itself, and who soon assume, superficially, the manners of all the civilized races of Europe, America or Asia, that mingle in the Pacific or Indian Ocean.

Are these masses of emigrants, driven from their homes through a vast over-population, or do they flee



ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

from harsh treatment or overwhelming disasters? Or is eagerness to seek their fortunes in new lands, rather than poverty in their native village, the cause of their exodus?

A census of population is one of the many riddles of mysterious China. Figures, however, are available. After 1741, owing to the system of family groupings,* the number of inhabitants was supposed to have been registered. But the reliability of these figures is extremely doubtful.† More recently statistics of custom houses‡ and post offices§ were rightly considered too high by those who have studied the question. Professor Wilcox, one of the most competent authorities, states that the Empire's population could hardly have reached 350 million in 1910.|| Taking as his basis the last census of Chinese families, and reckoning 4.7 as the average number of each family, Dr. Legendre considers that the sum total

* See Chang Heng Chen, *Changes in the Growth of China's Population in the last 182 years* (1926); (*Chinese Economic Journal*, p. 59-69).

† The following figures are available:-

1741	...	143,410,559
1771	...	214,600,356
1793	...	313,281,795
1800	...	295,237,331
1821	...	355,540,258
1840	...	412,814,828
1849	...	412,896,643

‡ 438,425,000 inhabitants, for only eighteen provinces, in 1910.

§ 438,378,680 for twenty-three provinces.

|| W. F. Wilcox: *The Population of China in 1910*. (*Journal of the American Statistical Association*, Vol. 23, 1928).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

scarcely exceeds 300 millions. It is true that the average of 4.7 is a doubtful point, and the Minister of the Interior places it at 5.5.

Since we are quite unable to ascertain the exact number of inhabitants, it is the more difficult to express a general opinion of their movements. More careful studies, however, have recently been attempted in certain rural districts of China. Dealing with only one year they seem to indicate a very rapid increase. For if the birth- and death-rates did not vary, and all the Chinese territories had the same prolificity as those under examination, population would appear to double every fifty years.*

In the valleys and river mouths, on the little rice-fields pieced out into mere patches, swarm such a mass of human beings as can scarcely breathe. It is an affecting and heartrending sight to see whole families on their tiny farms, passing their days in exacting toil, in cultivating, with endless efforts, a small patch of rice, peas, beans, or potatoes which a single peasant could quite easily raise by himself.

But elsewhere there are immense empty, slaty spaces or bleak hillocks without a house, a flock or single human being, an endless rise and fall of grassy slopes to which cling stunted scrub, where no living soul is seen in a journey of many miles, unless it be in a village buried in a hollow. But on the slope of hills are white stones, a chance collection of tombs.

* See C. M. Chiao and J. Lossing Buck, *The Composition of Rural Population Groups in China*. (*Chinese Economic Journal* (1928). Vol. 2, pp. 219-235).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

In China there are countless lands whose only inhabitants are the dead.

The acreage of cultivated land is very slight in comparison with the extent favourable to cultivation, according to American Agricultural experts it is even less than in the United States*; in that country it is 40 per cent, whereas in China it is not even 30 per cent. The result of this neglect of cultivation is as serious as the excessive over-population.

The appalling disasters which periodically sweep over the country drive into flight those whose standard of living is already low and who have thus little to keep them on their native soil. Two districts of China are the great centres of emigration.

In the south are Koung-Tong and Foukien, whose inhabitants people the lands near the equator and the tropics. In the north are Chang-Tong and Tcheli, where streams of helpless creatures wend their way to the provinces of Manchuria. Both these places are on the coast where the inhabitants, by long familiarity with the sea, are accustomed to the thought of voyages and distant travels. In these districts, however, the scourges of nature are especially frequent and dreadful.

Kouang-Tong, the rich tropical land, where the peasant can reap his three annual harvests of rice, where the mulberry and tobacco plant grow side by side, with its fruit and vegetables, tea and sugar, is also the land of terrible droughts which destroy the harvest and reduce whole countrysides to ruin. Chan-Tong

* See O. E. Baker: *Population and Agriculture*. (Geog. Rev., July, 1928, p. 355.)

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

and Tcheli—especially the former—are subject to sudden floods, which utterly destroy fields and plantations ready to be worked, if they do not even sweep away whole villages together with their inhabitants.

In 1921, 1924, and 1925, the Yellow River overflowed. In 1925 it swept away embankments, flooding more than a thousand villages at a cost of countless lives. Very often years of severe drought closely follow years of flood. Thus the years 1927 and 1928 were periods of unparalleled scarcity in the north of China.

Often, too, the outrages of men are added to those of Nature; pirates, many of them only starving peasants, soldiers who are greater robbers than the pirates, officials who under the pretext of taxes blackmail the peasant—all sorts of scourges add to the villagers' penury. In 1927 and 1928 in the north of China, at any rate, all these devastating scourges combined forces. Scenes of starvation and despair were enacted throughout the countryside with all the horror of fable; men ate roots and barks of trees, sold their wives or children for food, and fled by whole villages from their province and their country.

On the other hand, no government or administration ever intervenes to assist the men to flee far from famine and disaster. The contrast between the two nations is suggestive. In Japan the Government endeavours, by raising subsidies and carrying on an

* See W. H. Mallory, *China; Land of famine*. (New York American Geographical Society, 1926.)

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

active propaganda, to encourage the peasants to emigrate, but they refuse to go. In China, in the midst of anarchy and complete indifference on the part of the authorities, hundreds of thousands, and during the past two years even millions, of the inhabitants have embarked for distant countries.

But though they never grant assistance to the emigrants, the future fortunes of their fellow countrymen overseas are still a matter of concern for the Government of the Republic. The campaign for the abolition of unfair treaties implies, along with the suppression of privileges accorded to foreigners in China, the repeal of laws restricting the liberties of the Chinese in other countries. On November 11th, 1928, 'The Association for the Prosperity of the Chinese Abroad,' was inaugurated at Shanghai. For Celestials settled in Indo-China, Java, the Philippines, and British colonies, the Government is endeavouring to obtain from the authorities the rights of equality accorded to other inhabitants.

Leading statesmen of the Republic have seized numerous occasions to prove the unity of emigrant Chinese and their compatriots in the mother country. In 1912 when the new National Assembly was appointed, a bill proposed to allocate ten seats in that body to representatives of Chinese overseas. An electoral college at Peking, composed of delegates of the Chinese Chambers of Commerce abroad, was to elect them.* This was sheer altruism, it is true,

* See MacNair, *The Chinese Abroad. Their Position and Protection*, Shanghai, 1925.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

like most of the proposals of Chinese law, but very significant. More effective were the connections through emissaries which Canton still maintains with all the Chinese scattered throughout the world. Government posts have very often been assigned not only to students returning from Europe or America, but to actual emigrants who have long resided in the lands of the Pacific or the Indian Ocean. 'Tell the emigrants,' says the *China Critic** 'that a Chinese from California is now Chinese Secretary-General for the League of Nations, that a Chinese from Java is President of the University, that a Chinese from the United States is the Chinese "Lindy" and was the first of our nation successfully to attempt a long distance flight and . . . let all this convince the Chinese overseas to return to China where they are so heartily welcome.'

For this lively interest in their fellow-countrymen in exile the Celestials have excellent reasons. The Chinese emigrant to-day represents a power in the world. From merchants in Java or Indo-China, planters or directors of mines in the Philippines or Malaya, the Kuomintang of Canton has received considerable sums of money. It may be that the real wealth of China lies overseas.

Perhaps, too, the China of to-morrow is also being created overseas. Freed from the utter lawlessness of China, living in countries that have escaped the horrors of civil wars, the Chinese is taking his first lessons in western economic methods. He will bring not only

* *The China Critic* (December 13th, 1928, p. 566-567).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

gold back to his countrymen, but the means of acquiring it as well; his experience will be even more valuable to his compatriots than his fortune. The diversity of the trades to which he has turned his hand overseas will prove to have been a long lesson, during which he was ever acquiring new power and a science that has proved its value. Chinese emigration indeed is no longer a phase in the lives of the helpless, a flight to distant lands. It has become a deliberate effort to pass beyond the barriers of old China, the venture of the energetic in new countries.

Two different kinds of emigration are to be found as well as others partaking of both types. The primitive type, which in the past poured onwards to Kouan-Tong and Kouang-Si settlers from the banks of the Yellow River, still continues. The days of great displacements of peoples are not yet over. The dangerous influx of fugitives from Chang-Tong and Tcheli to Mongolia and Manchuria again suggests those wandering masses, urged on by hunger and who halt of their own accord at the first good district which they find empty.

The other kind of emigrants, manual labourers, whose numbers are determined by conditions in the countries for which they are destined, is still to be found in China. Following the examples of the Celestials who, with the Indians, began more than a century ago replacing slaves on the sugar and coffee plantations, many Chinese, recruited by foreign agencies, still go off and work in under-populated countries. Chinese peasants and coolies are despatched under contract to

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the sugar plantations in the Antilles, the rubber in Malaya and the East Indies, coffee in New Caledonia and the islands of the Pacific.*

The motives of the merchants who emigrate are now more ambitious, but are still influenced by old traditions. Their organizations overseas are conducted on the same system as in the Metropolis. They derive their strength, above all, from the past; every year newcomers from the Mother Country are absorbed into a social community already formed. Such groups have invaded almost all the lands on the Pacific and Indian Oceans, being especially influential in Java, Indo-China and Siam.

Finally the most recent type of emigrant consists of individuals who voluntarily leave their village,† being attracted to any place on the globe that is a centre of capital in the hope of obtaining a share. The virgin lands of the tropics or those reinvigorated by modern skill and rich in promises and in projects already fulfilled, Sumatra, the Philippines, Burma or British Malaya, are those to which the Chinese comes to improve his position and quickly acquires western methods.

Doubtless in all the lands which emigrants may enter every kind of alien is to be found. But in some of them local conditions call for a specific type of people.

* See P. C. Campbell, *Chinese Coolie Emigration to Countries within the British Empire* (London, 1923).

† See the *Proceedings of the Second Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations*, Honolulu (1921), p. 148.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

The case of the manual labourer will only be mentioned incidentally. Indian emigrations will supply instances more true to type. But it is proposed to study an example of each of the other three classes.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHINESE AND JAPANESE IN MANCHURIA

Early history of Manchuria - Its government - Clashing of two over-populated countries - Extent of Japanese trade - Food exports - The Land of the soy bean - Mineral wealth and railways.

Quite close both to Japan, with her teeming population, and to the most densely thronged regions of China proper, are provinces still unexploited, almost entirely undeveloped and practically uninhabited only thirty years ago. It is a land shown to be fertile, where in plains and valleys a great variety of cultivation already flourishes; corn, millet, rice, the mulberry tree, and in greater profusion than anywhere else, that ever useful plant of the Far East, the soy bean. Its soil is rich in mineral reserves, iron and coal. Among the exhausted lands of the Far East, here is a young territory calling for men, capital, machinery, and transport, and which can supply in exchange foodstuffs and raw materials for industry. With its prospects and its wealth, Manchuria was inevitably meant to play the part of Promised Land for the two great overcrowded countries of Asia. It seems to offer to China and Japan alike the remedies with which to combat

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the evils of over-population. But the two races have not chosen the same cure.

The reasons for Manchuria's comparative isolation during many centuries, her under-development, and the fact that her population is still very restricted, are due to her past history, far more than to her position on the map.

The home of the nomadic tribes, who in the middle of the seventeenth century conquered China, Manchuria has remained a dependency of that power rather than one of its integral parts. During the reign of the Manchu Dynasty in the Middle Empire, the mother land of her conquerors possessed a separate sovereignty, and the three provinces of which it consisted remained grouped together under their own viceroys.

Ever since the earliest days of their expansion, the Manchurian conquerors believed that they would only retain the lands they had subdued and maintain their authority there, so long as their own country continued independent. The soldiers, who with them or in their wake, descended upon limitless China were content with sporadic occupations, and, being too few in numbers, could never attempt any colonizing in any considerable groups. They were gradually absorbed by the teeming populations in the valleys of China; only the three northern provinces retained representatives of the older race.

In order to prevent the Manchurians who had remained on their native soil from meeting with the same fate as befell those who had swarmed into China,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the Pekin dynasties closed vast territories to all Southerners. Long before the conquest of their country by the Manchurians, colonists from China had come and settled south of Mukden. Continual quarrels had broken out between these immigrant peasants and the native herdsmen, and the aliens in their settlements seemed likely to absorb the aboriginal nomads. After 1644 the Chinese were forbidden to settle east of Mukden. Only the former colonists, who had long been established in the neighbouring districts, made further attempts to clear the country farther to the north, following the valleys. Sometimes, too, when the Pekin treasury was empty, the sovereigns were forced to sell vast tracts of lands to the Chinese.* But until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, restrictions were so severe that the Three Provinces remained almost undeveloped.

The policy of the Manchurian Emperors has to-day brought about this strange result. In a country almost a quarter of China in size, with plains more extensive than any to be found in Asia of the monsoons, the population is nearly twenty times as small as in the Celestial Republic. When such a policy had been once abandoned, Manchuria inevitably became a possession highly to be desired by the peoples of Asia.

The activity both of Japanese and Chinese in the Three Provinces show clearly the difference in the deliberate policy of the two races and their action in dealing with their over-population. The Japanese

* Early in 1800 lands in the Soungari Valley were sold to the Chinese who hastened to occupy them.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

development is organized for economic purposes, while China is concerned for her own people who come freely and of their own accord.

The history of the populating of Manchuria, as we have seen, is one of the most typical examples of the Japanese's aversion to emigrate. In these plains, where the climate is doubtless trying but yet temperate, the Japanese, despite the facilities that have been afforded them, have scarcely settled in any quantity. But economically they have become the masters of Southern Manchuria, and politically their influence there is considerable.

Kouang-Tong, with Port Arthur and Dairen, is administered by their laws. In the other territories of Southern Manchuria, as far as Tchang-Tchouen, the Japanese South Manchurian Railway Company controls the economic life of the whole district; after the Russo-Japanese War it took over the rights of the Russian company, which included permission to erect along the line military posts, concessions of forests and mines, leases of land to build towns and, greatest privilege of all, administrative rights in the conceded zones.

The whole world then expected to witness an immediate colonizing of the rich Manchurian plains by Japanese peasants. But though this territory is now theirs to control, very few Japanese have settled in the Three Provinces. In 1927, of nearly 700,000 inhabitants, Kouang-Tong itself scarcely comprised more than 90,000 Japanese, mostly settled at Dairen; 85,000



Photo Sth. Manchurian Rly.
EMIGRANTS ON THE ROAD TO MANCHURIA



Photo Sth. Manchurian Rly.
RESTING BY THE ROADSIDE

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

others were scattered along the track of the South Manchurian Railway, and scarcely 35,000 throughout the other districts of Manchuria.

Moreover, most of these had not settled permanently. They were engineers in the railways, harbours or mines, government employees, merchants or shop keepers, groups almost exclusively comprised of merchants and officials who are continually changing their residences as the result of appointments and inspections, and generally return after a few years to their native land.

The number of Japanese farmers in Manchuria is negligible in the territories leased at Kouang-Tong; for a thousand Chinese farmers in 1926 there was not one single Japanese;* and yet in the ultimatum sent to China in 1915, the Japanese had specifically insisted, as one of their Twenty-one Demands, that the colonists must be granted concessions of lands in the Three Provinces.

Japan, who is seeking a remedy for her over-population by increasing her productive power rather than by limiting numbers in her own country, has so far made no serious attempt to settle colonists in Manchuria. What she hopes to find there are business openings and resources to develop – new markets to counteract the appalling trade balance due to imported foodstuffs. She wants more food supplies which will make up for the deficiencies in her own cultivation, more raw materials, and steam power, to hasten on her

* In that year less than 3 per cent of the landworkers in all Manchuria were Japanese.

ASIA'S 'TEEMING MILLIONS

industrialization. Such are the two-fold advantages which Japan for the last twenty-five years has endeavoured to obtain from Manchuria.

The Manchurian market is now one of the most important and most reliable for the Japanese merchant. No competitor could attain her volume of trade, or even prove a disquieting factor in the 'Three Provinces.* The factories, which year after year rise in growing numbers in South Manchuria, use Japanese machinery. The consuming power of the ever-increasing population grows daily greater. Japanese exports to Manchuria represent nearly a quarter of the total Japanese exports to China. There have, of course, been occasions when, smarting under some political grievance, Chinese Nationalists have boycotted Japanese merchandise, such as in 1927 and 1928, in retaliation for the 'positive policy' of Baron Tanaka and the Japanese Government in the Three Provinces. Such action may possibly perturb the Japanese producer, but its effect on statistics is only momentary.

Even more important for Japan than the Manchurian markets, are the country's natural resources. Since 1900 the total of exports has continuously risen in huge proportions. In 1926 it had attained four times the total of 1912.† Such a rise was all the

* Imports into Manchuria (in taels):

		From the rest of China	From Japan	From other countries.
1924	...	69,392,450	69,273,170	44,661,307
1925	...	90,921,351	92,521,980	41,183,778
1926	...	95,505,634	107,677,003	44,951,582

† Rising from 89,309, 545 taels to 370,149,490.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

more remarkable since the post-war situation is unsettled, the finances of the Three Provinces, following the precedent of China as a whole, are tottering beneath the burden of ministerial corruption, and issues of fresh money are being continually sanctioned.

Now of these exports barely a third goes to China proper and a fifth to Russia and Europe. Japan's trade with Manchuria is as great as that of all the other countries combined, more than half the foodstuffs embarked at Dairen being despatched to the Empire of the Rising Sun.

Food products, primary or others, are the most valuable. Cereals form only an unimportant part, for maize and millet are consumed in the country itself or sent to the unproductive provinces in the North of China. Manchurian rice plays no appreciable part in Japanese food supplies, while corn, now grown in the Northern Provinces to an increasing extent, is sent mainly to Russia. But the chief export, stacked up in the warehouses, ports, and Customs Houses for transport overseas, the connecting link between the fields of Manchuria and the Japanese market is the soy bean.

Manchuria has often been called the 'Land of the Soy Bean;' indeed, for the last fifteen years, it seems to have become the Manchurian peasants' principal source of wealth. No Japanese farmer actually grows it in the Three Provinces, and it is only through middlemen that it reaches the great markets of Tchang-Tchouen or Kharbin. But the agent who forwards it thence to Dairen, and from that port to

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the Japanese Empire, is a Japanese. Nearly 40 per cent of the soy grown in Manchuria is exported to Japan.* It is used in many different fashions. It plays an important part in that country's staple food; eaten raw, in salad, pickled, boiled, pressed and set to ferment into cheese, it appears on the Japanese table as soup or sauce, nourishing dishes, dripping or cake, gravy, oil or butter. It serves as animal fodder, and provides the fats and vitamins to such people as cannot obtain meat. With its aid the industrialist will be able to manufacture enamel or varnish, glycerine or colouring matter, soap, chintzes, printing ink, or celluloid. But its chief use is as a sterate. Crushed, compressed into ovals, soy cakes to-day supply nearly 80 per cent of the fats used by the Japanese peasants. In 1927 1,176,468 tons of cakes were sent to the Empire.† The industry of turning the skin of the bean into cakes for exportation is also entirely in the hands of the Japanese. At Dairen alone there are eighty factories producing the cakes, and at the same time extracting the oil to make grease and soaps.

Japan, therefore, depends for the success of her agriculture on the Manchurian provinces. They are the real sources of her food supplies. It is true that sulphate of ammonia as a fertilizer is becoming more general in Japan, and the arbitrary rise in price on which the Chinese Government insisted, encourages the Japanese to have recourse to nitrógenes. Yet

* The average annual harvest reaches 5,000,000 tons, 78 per cent of which is exported, more than half to Japan.

† Valued at 88,000,000 yen.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the ricefields of the Empire owe their fertility to the soy fields of Manchuria.

But the development of the wealth of the Three Provinces is as fully the concern of the Japanese industrialist as of the commissioners, for there he can find close at hand the raw materials which he requires. Of these the principal is iron. Ever since 1910 the Japanese have owned two large iron deposits in Manchuria, at Anschan and Penchiu. They have found near Mukden important veins, the scarcity of which, aggravated by the embargo of American mining officials, is the night-mare of Japanese Imperialists. At Anschan alone the mineral reserve is calculated at more than 300 million tons.* Doubtless the mineral is not rich, but the Japanese mining engineer knew how to adapt his requirements to its possibilities. A new type of blast furnaces have been set up which effect an increase of production by more than half. In 1927 the output was more than four times as high as that of Japan. Exported to Japan, pig iron is frequently sent back into Manchuria in its manufactured form, for the metal required by the railways.

As for coal, it is a remarkable fact that Japanese Manchuria already produces sufficient for her own use and even exports a large quantity every year. The great colliery of Manchuria, Fou-Chouen, alone produces more than a quarter of the entire Japanese output. These mines are easy to work, for the anthracite seams, thick, yet of shallow depth and near the

* See Wilfred Smith, *Coal and Iron in China*: Foster Bain, *Ores and Industry in the Far East* (1927).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

surface, can be dealt with by miners in the open air; the coal is found in seams in which the bituminous schists and sand superimposed are visible in beds; they suggest huge symmetrical diatomes prepared for scientific examination.

Owing to the supply of Chinese labour, to the fact that railways run in the immediate neighbourhood, and to facilities for working them, the net cost is relatively low. Since the War, the Japanese have paid special attention to their development. More than 3,000 Japanese directors, engineers, foremen, and overseers live near the mine, and the capital invested in it is exclusively Japanese. This rapid development of Southern Manchuria has been organised and co-ordinated by control of the railway.

The construction of this railway with its lines, engines and sheds has used up a great part of the Manchurian iron and coal and of the timber brought down from the mountains in the East. The administration of the conceded territories is under the control of the Southern Manchurian Railway, and not of the Japanese Government. The technical processes, which have reinvigorated the economic life of the Three Provinces have been elaborated, or brought to perfection, in the Railway's laboratories; such as the various uses of the soy bean, and the employment of the pig iron at Anschan and of the bi-products from the Fou-Chouen colliery. But above all, the railway line has been the source of supply by which life has penetrated into Manchuria.

As branch lines have spread out from the great

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

main artery, from Dairen to Mukden and thence to Tchang-Tchouan, soy, barley, maize and even cotton,* have grown in plains and valleys. The years 1926 to 1928, periods of great activity in the construction of these lines,† have also been very strenuous times in the populating of Manchuria.

At the terminus of the Japanese lines is the great port of Dairen, a proof of the trend of Japanese economic policy. Once the Russian Dalny, owing to the railway it has gradually taken over the goods which in those times came via Vladivostok; the fifth port in China in 1916, it is now the fourth. In fifteen years its tonnage has trebled.‡ More than seven-tenths of the shipping there is Japanese. The raw materials and foodstuffs which will reduce the Japanese debit balance pass through Dairen. There, too, come the Japanese manufactured articles. And if the volume of trade is destined some day to decrease, the advantage will not accrue to Vladivostok, for the Japanese already propose to construct a harbour in Korea, at the terminus of the line joining Ghirin and Central Manchuria with the sea.

The products of Northern Manchuria also come to Dairen, for the Japanese have acquired important interests as far as the sphere of influence of the Chinese Eastern Railway. At least half of the timber concessions

* For past and projected developments see *Japan Advertiser Annual Review* (1928), p. 45.

† Over 600 miles of line were constructed in Manchuria in the Spring of 1927. See C. W. Young, *Economic Bases for New Railways in Manchuria*. (*Chinese Economic Journal*, April, 1927.)

‡ Rising from 2,881,040 tons in 1911 to 9,597,150 tons in 1926.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

east of Soungari are under their control. Many flour mills have recently been built north of Kharbin with Japanese capital. But the most useful commodities which Japan brings southward are the products of Northern Manchuria, corn and soy, which are transformed in the mills, collieries and chemical product factories at the great port. On this firm basis are output in the Russian zone, manufacture in the Japanese, and consumption in the Islands secured.

While Japan is seeking in Manchuria an indirect remedy for her over-population, China finds that country an ever-ready resort for her own people. If the first power for the last twenty-five years has added to the value of its natural resources, developed its trade, supervised means of exploiting its wealth, increased communications and systems of exchange, China has, in an even shorter period, poured in literally hundreds of thousands of her destitute, starvelings and unemployed and peopled desert lands and untilled fields.

Such an efflux is unparalleled in history, and has lately assumed the amazing character of a displacement of a whole nation. And the movement is all the more significant in view of the few words in which it may be related, and because it has swept in full tide into this Northern China during the sudden *volte-face* of the War.*

* Valuable information on Chinese emigration in Manchuria is to be found in Mr. Walter C. Young's series of remarkable articles, *Chinese Colonization in Manchuria*. (*Far Eastern Review*, June and

ASIA'S 'TEEMING MILLIONS

In the years immediately following 1878, and the opening up of Manchuria, Chinese emigration could be reckoned by mere tens of thousands. Colonization in Manchuria is still a hazardous adventure. Even more than the rest of the Empire, the Three Provinces are lands abandoned to plunder and piracy, overrun by nomad tribes and itinerant robbers. Moreover, the economic ties of Manchuria are not sufficiently close with China proper. An interesting explanation of the slow progress of Chinese colonization in Northern Manchuria has been given by the Russian Yashnow. According to this authority, the farmer from North China when he leaves his own land in normal times, only settles in lands that are widely open to foreign influences, or at any rate at an easy distance to the neighbouring market. He must have them situated near the great railway lines, or recently constructed roads. If the Russian has succeeded in reaching the Amour banks long before the Celestial, this was, according to Yashnow, owing to the readiness with which he consents to settle in districts that are still wild, having no contact with urban centres.

July, 1928), and in his report after the enquiry which he conducted on behalf of the Congress of the Institute of Pacific Relations of Kyoto. These works are based upon publications not easy of access, belonging to the Southern Manchurian and East China Railway Companies. The author is indebted to Mr. Young for much information contained in this chapter. See also the *Report of Progress in Manchuria* (1907 - 1928), published by the South Manchurian Company; the *Statistical Year Book* (1929) of the Chinese Eastern Railway; Chsu Hsiao, *Manchuria, a Survey of its Resources, Industries, and Immigration*; W. H. Mallory, *The Northern Migration of the Chinese*, (*Foreign Affairs*, 1929).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

The exploiting of the Three Provinces after the Russo-Japanese War, their development on rational lines, and the fall of the Manchu Dynasties, were all factors which encouraged emigration, at any rate in the south of the country. It was only after the War, when China sank still more deeply beneath the disturbances of civil factions, and the growing prosperity of the Manchurian plains stood out in favourable contrast to the hapless anarchy of China, that the movement spread more rapidly.

The whole districts of Chang-Tong and Tcheli sent forth their inhabitants beyond the Great Walls into the Three Provinces. Between 1919 and 1924, according to the information collected by the Manchurian Railways, the annual total of entries amounted to 400,000, in 1925 it nearly reached 500,000, exceeded 600,000 in 1926, and in the following year, rose to more than a million, a figure which it maintained in 1928.*

Formerly emigration was chiefly seasonal. Until 1924 most of the labourers came in the spring, and departed in the autumn. Nearly two-thirds of the emigrants who came to Manchuria left the country in the same year. Many were farmers and the most numerous farm-hands, brought by the railway companies to work on the allotted lands near the main lines; the manual labour required for work in factories, the construction of railway lines, and unloading at the harbours was also recruited, partly in the provinces of Tcheli and Chang-Tong. Chinese workers were bound by contract to work for a season on Manchurian

* Of these 58 per cent remained in the country.

ASIA'S TREMbling MILLIONS

enterprises. Many emigrants doubtless settled in the Three Provinces when their contracts were terminated. After the first summer spent in Manchuria some had managed to acquire the wherewithal to build themselves a shelter for the winter; others were earning, in workshop or mine, sufficient pay to send for their families, or having gone too far up country in the spring and returned too late in the autumn, found their way snowbound. But most of the exiles were not lost to their native province.

But gradually seasonal emigration is developing into permanent settlement. Whilst Manchuria is being organized through Japanese influence, scourges of Nature and War are falling with an unparalleled violence on Chang-Tong and Tcheli. The years 1927 and 1928 were periods of wide-spread famine. Chang-Tong swarms with a starving populace living on grass, barks of trees and roots; men sink down from exhaustion, never to rise again. Whole families are wandering on the great roadways.

The exodus is becoming a panic. Villages and whole districts are emptied of their inhabitants. There is now no question of leaving wife, children, or aged parents on the native soil. They must be taken too, to save them from famine and death. The exiles are not as in old days, looking for work—they are looking for a home. The unified movement becomes the family, one solitary household in the Chinese sense of the word, with brothers and sisters and often cousins as well.

The emigrant is little concerned with future prospects. His exile has been enforced upon him. It

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

is due more to destitution in his own country than to the attraction of Manchuria. It is a flight. There is no time for plans to be worked out as the traveller does. Dangers, and exhaustion by the wayside, are as nothing compared with the immediate threat of death. It is not only in spring that emigrants leave their provinces, but in the summer and even in the autumn, with no immediate prospect before them save the boisterous, icy, workless winter in Manchuria.

Hordes struggling onwards on the great roads looking like refugees in an unending war. The family takes all its possessions with it. Carts drawn by oxen transport the property of whole villages. The ancestral portraits have been carefully packed in a linen cloth. Men carry the implements of their toil, their ploughshares, spades, or rakes; babies are perched on the women's backs. Here and there in the middle of a group stray skinny oxen. The sound of these fugitives can be heard from afar, the din of steps on the road, the echo of a song by whose rhythm the men manage to keep going. On very rare occasions food has been brought, but for most of the time the exiles have nothing whatever to eat; in such cases they seize anything that they find on the road. And sometimes they steal, and at others march on whole days without food. Some die like beasts by the wayside. At nightfall, when they cease from marching on, they lie on the grass near the roadway, or they dump themselves in dozens in the ox-carts. In dust, in mud and snow, according to the seasons, they go their way, lousy, verminous, half-naked, always forward to the North.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

If they have the means, the emigrants do their utmost to avoid long journeys on foot. They make use of every means of transport offered them. Most of them, for at any rate some part of the journey, go by boat or railway. In order to join the main line from Mukden and Khaibin, many take ship in the harbours of Chang-Tong, An-Tung, or Newchang, and so reach Dairen by sea. Others, chiefly those coming from Tcheli, take the railway from Pekin to Mukden.

Steamship and railway companies have quickly realized the profits to be made from this onrush of humanity. In the first place the great maritime companies gain by taking on board emigrants from China. Only very few exiles cross the Gulf of Petchili in small junks, most of them being crowded on the big steamers. This human cargo is an insurance against the risk of missing cargoes of merchandise. The emigrant fills up some empty space in the hold. When there are few goods, the price per man is low, but if there is much to take, it goes up. In any case the low price of human transport is largely counter-balanced by the considerable demand for it. And no special accommodation is provided; on the bridge, forward, in the stern, or hold, men, women and children are dumped down on top of each other, often so close together that they cannot move. Cases have occurred of total loss of Chinese vessels, crew and cargo, so overladen were they with human beings.

The railway companies also have quickly taken advantage of this shifting of people. Both the South Manchurian in the south, the East China Railway in



Photo Stb Manchuria Ry

CHINESE IMMIGRANTS FROM SHANGHAI

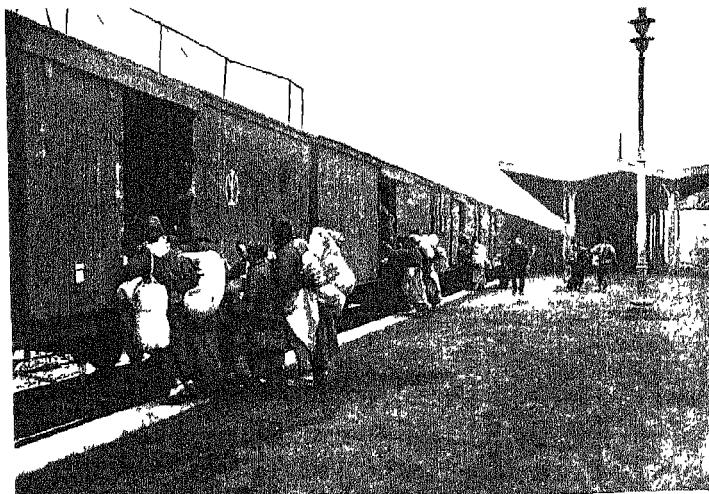


Photo Stb Manchuria Ry

CHINESE IMMIGRANTS BOARDING THE TRAIN AT DAIKIN

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the north, either on their own initiative, or at the request of the Chinese Government, have granted constantly reduced fares to emigrants. Formerly the cost of the journey was comparatively high, except for their own employees. But after the War reductions on a growing scale were conceded; in 1925 the cost of transit was reduced by a half. Old men and children are carried free. The companies want to encourage settlements and all serious attempts at colonizing. The more numerous the colonists, the more rapid the development of the country's resources. The railways do not have to wait long for their profits which in spite of low prices are quickly forthcoming. On the trucks used for emigrants a man can be thrust into the smallest space imaginable. The vast numbers of the travellers makes up for their quality. When the train stops, the crowd may be seen hurrying in swarms out of the stations. Travellers difficult to keep under control, a cumbrous and doubtless dangerous horde both from a hygienic and a political point of view, but remunerative, and eagerly catered for by the two great rival lines of Manchuria.

Joining up again with Mukden, either by the Pekin-Mukden main line, or the Dairen-Mukden, having first disembarked at Dairen, the stream of emigrants usually skirts the Manchurian plain, ascending by the South Manchurian line to Tchang-Tchouen, and then by the East Chinese to Kharbin. As it proceeds northward the crowd thins out. At the first opportunity offered the groups swarm over the countryside. But Southern Manchuria has already

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

relatively a larger population than the north; to find permanent homes for these great human hordes, rich and practically deserted lands are wanted, where the struggle for the soil is as yet unknown, and the arrival of new colonists is a benefit and not a cause of rivalry. According to Mr. Young and the East Chinese Company, more than half the colonists settle north of Kharbin. It is in the farthest north of Manchuria that the proportion of cultivated land is still the smallest in comparison with the surface that might be brought under cultivation. Previous colonists only went as far north as the territory traversed by the railway.*

Of those who left the great stream of emigrants at the tracts of the Southern Manchurian, some—but only a few—are left stranded in the large towns. Flotsam of a movement chiefly rural in character, isolated individuals who stop on the way through lack of strength or resources. The harbour works at Dairen during the vast extension of the town have snapped up, during the last fifteen years, some of the itinerant labourers, ready for any job, and Mukden, besides the Chinese traders whom it attracts, is a centre for those who have not succeeded in settling in the neighbouring country districts, and who come on the chance of work among the swarm of coolies.

Among the colonists, who settled in the rural district of Southern Manchuria, some made their homes there on the first opportunity offered. Notices

* According to Yashnow the 'Registered Colonization Fund' in 1926 occupied one-fifth of the northern provinces of Heilung-chiang and Kirin.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

of landlords requiring labour read on a station platform, names of lands to be colonized passing from mouth to mouth, offers of work from officials hinting at profitable advances, such allurements are quite enough to stop on their way whole groups worn out by travel, long tramps, and hardships. Sometimes, on the other hand, the name of their destination has been known to them ever since they left China by notices posted in the villages, by propaganda or agents who have come from Manchuria or from messages from friends already settled there. Groups of emigrants then withdraw from the great stream. At the farthest south, instead of disembarking at Dairen, many little junks with crooked sails come to the mouth of the Yalou, and go up with the tide; in the great forests of pine or spruce, oak, maple, and birch, the Chinese gets a job as a wood-cutter. Farther north, equidistant from Mukden and Tchang-Tchouen, two cross lines of the South Manchurian bring fresh settlers to the fertile side of the Manchurian plain at the foot of Little Khingan Range.* As the lines cross and proceed on their ways, gradually little holdings, already beginning to crowd together, spring up around them. Men huddle together in the big farms with their thatched roofs and wooden walls. The cultivation of millet and soy is extended as the railway continues.

But it is not till it has reached the north of Kharbin that the stream actually breaks up and scatters fan-wise into countries almost uninhabited. The vast wave of humanity, having burst across the Three Provinces,

* The Mukden-Heilungchiang Line.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

comes to ebb away in the northern limit of Manchuria. From Kharbin there are many routes for colonists. One of these proceeds north-west along the Trans-Manchurian Railway; it is a zone of rich pasture lands and fertile soil, and most travellers on reaching it from Siberia would think it a farmer's paradise. Another leads south-east along the line from Kharbin to Vladivostok, diverging from the line until it reaches the farthest end of Manchuria towards Lake Khanka, where rich seams of coal are beginning to be worked. The most important route is the riverway from Soungari; in spring time the river is black with junks and even during 1926 and the two following winters long lines of sledges and convoys were to be seen out on the frozen river. On the lands nearby, which were practically undeveloped ten years ago, colonization was so rapid as to allow in 1928 of many tons of cereals being sent inland. Traffic is diverted from its original route through recent immigration; formerly Russians were eager to import the wealth of the valley into their mills in the maritime Province. But to-day the Chinese trader turns the stream of products in the opposite direction, to Kharbin and then southward.

Little exploited and very fertile these lands in Manchuria may be, yet it would be a mistake to imagine that they always offer a Heaven-sent refuge to these poor wretches eagerly seeking food and work. The reason of the onrush northwards is partly explained by the growing difficulty of immediately finding occupation in the south. The stream of emigration to Manchuria is hurried, impulsive, and without any

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

pre-conceived idea. The emigration bureaux propaganda rarely succeeds in reaching the emigrants and directing their route. But they sometimes get suggestions from officials in the Manchurian provinces, making promise of implements, houses, or land in the Three Provinces.*

Having come by their own fancy, or through the often deceptive promises of Manchurian gangsters or officials, they arrive entirely without resources in a country where the colds of early winter can only be endured by those suitably housed. As has been often observed, the regularity of the harvests affords the Mukden peasant a security that his brother in the Chinese valleys does not enjoy. The Three Provinces do not experience, as do the lands of China proper, contrasts of years of scarcity and prosperity. But the influx of refugees rarely turns northwards. Famine may stalk along the main roads like some contagious disease, from Chang-Tong.

The year 1929 was marked, by a diminution of Chinese emigrants in the Three Provinces; the number of new arrivals did not exceed 200,000. The Russo-Chinese conflict has temporarily almost barred to colonizers a whole part of North Manchuria.

Chinese emigration to Manchuria is none the less a factor of outstanding interest. Up to the present the Three Provinces have absorbed crowds of refugees and unemployed. With their vast resources they will quite possibly be able to absorb all the millions

* See H. MacKinney, *Recent and Current Events in Manchuria*. (*Far Eastern Review*, February, 1929)

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

of new emigrants who have come since 1926. Every Chinaman to-day has his eyes fixed on this promised land. The importance which they attach to this new refuge, especially on the most northerly districts, largely explains their political activity in this zone towards the Russians. As we shall see, it will also explain China's attitude to Japan. This great displacement of a people because they are destitute, this flight of starving hordes across whole countries, is doubtless destined to become in the future one of the most decisive factors of Chinese politics.

Manchuria is a field for Japanese enterprise, whereas for the Chinese it is a land for her nationals to inhabit. Can these two conceptions of the same provinces be reconciled, or are they utterly at variance? Are the two endeavours complementary, or are the two aspirations rivals each of the other?

In practice both nations can assist each other. The development of Southern Manchuria, due to Japanese efforts, has attracted the Chinese to that territory, while by colonizing it they have enhanced its value for Japan. 'We have developed Manchuria, allowed millions of destitute from Chang-Song, Tcheli, and Honan to settle there,' says the Japanese statesman; 'and the Chinese should be grateful to us and grant us favours in return.' The development of iron or coal mines, the continual laying down of railways, the harbours and building of factories, these are so many concrete examples of Japanese energy and intelligence for the benefit of the Chinese worker. Markets for

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

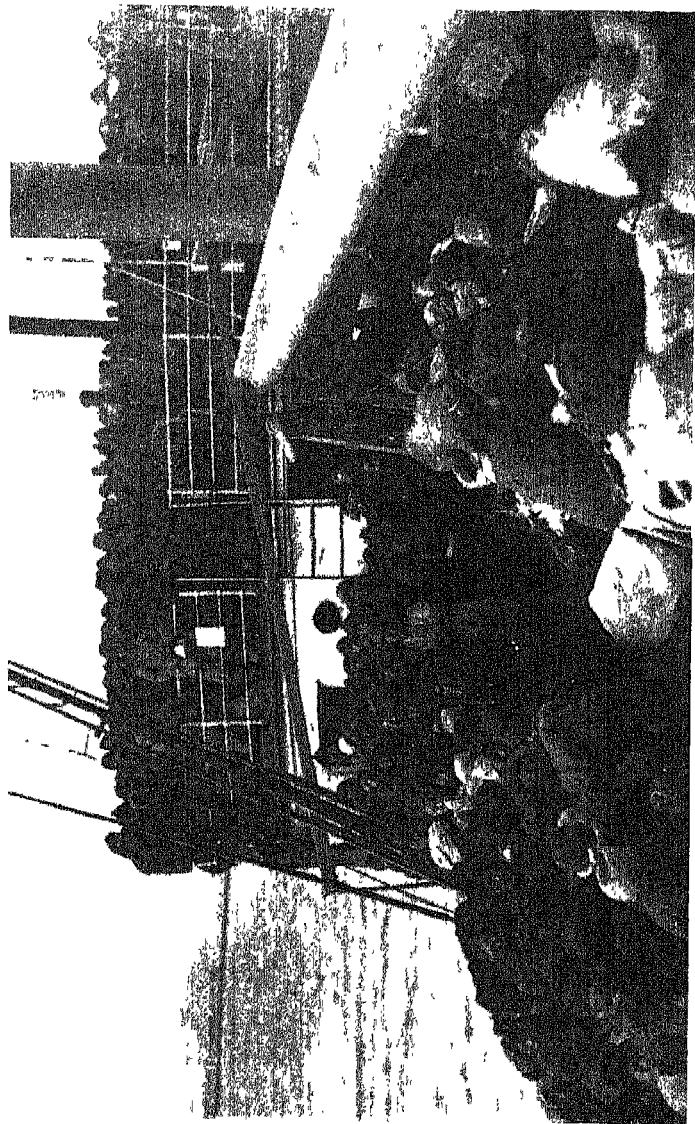
foodstuffs are constantly increasing, so many proofs of Japanese enterprise for the benefit of the Chinese peasant. On the other hand, as trade, industry, and agriculture in Manchuria have developed, imported labour has become more and more necessary. Private concerns, especially those depending on the vast central administration of the South Manchurian railway, will have to organise their labour-recruiting propaganda in the provinces of North China. Every newcomer is, for the Japanese, not only a producer but a consumer as well; an insignificant individual, whose requirements however small, from his railway ticket to the shirt on his back, represent so much profit to the Japanese. The collaboration of Japanese and Chinese in Manchuria is one of economics with human beings, or of the machine with the worker – a combination, in fact, of the forces which Asia draws from her teeming peoples and those which she has discovered in western skill effectively controlled.

But the political ambitions of the two races are turning a policy which began in collaboration into causes of dissension. In populating the Three Provinces the Chinese are furthering their future prospects, but daily testify how closely they are united with China proper. By developing it, the Japanese increase these Provinces' prosperity, but daily intensify their influence in the country. Population and development progress simultaneously, but as efforts to secure political supremacy they embitter an already long-standing rivalry. Both Chinese and Japanese support their claims to Manchuria by arguments from past

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

history; the first power because the Three Provinces have always formed part of her own dominion, and her reunion under Chinese rule is quite in accordance with her traditions, while the latter's claim is based on the rights acquired at Russia's expense, recognised by China after the Russo-Japanese War and still further strengthened in 1915 by the Twenty-one Demands. But beside these theoretical discussions each country has to establish its actual authority. The Chinese now have the men, the dwellers on the soil who teem and multiply and spread over plains and valleys and cover a land once almost deserted with millions of settlers. The Japanese possess all the organization which secures a living for these men and all the business equipment which develops the country's wealth. In this struggle for a land, the one Power sends forth the men, and the other supplies resources, capital, and experience.

The relations between the two people have not, of course, always been so simple. They are complicated by the interference of other Powers. The alternatives of working together or quarrelling are involved in other governments' politics. For instance, after a policy in Northern Manchuria consisting of bidding for the favours of the Chinese Nationalists against the Japanese, and after having shared with the former Power their rights on the East Chinese Railway, the Russians, apparently against their own interests, have brought about the union of the two races, who want to expel them. America, too, whose interests are less obvious, plays her part in the Three Provinces.



CHINESE EMIGRANTS ON THE VOYAGE TO DAIREN

Photo Sh. V. inchur an Rly

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Without her intervention the contest between the Japanese exploiters, government-directed and disciplined, on the one side, and the mass of Chinese refugees, poverty stricken and ignorant, on the other, would indeed be ill-matched. In their endeavour to use the awakening of Chinese nationalist consciousness as a means to counteract Japanese encroachments, the United States are definitely opposed to that Power's political expansions in Manchuria. So far they have succeeded in maintaining in the Three Provinces the policy of the Open-Door, and the prolonged opposition raised in America to the marketing of the Japanese loan for developing Manchuria is significant of this state of feeling.*

More than any other part of Asia, Manchuria to-day is the cockpit of the nations' rivalries, of political aspirations and strategic ambitions. But behind these restless intrigues, ever resounds the clash of the two great over-populated countries, and of the two great growing forces of Asia, the one in men, the other in economics — China and Japan.

* See Geo. Bronson Rea, *Japan in Manchuria*. (*Far Eastern Review*, January, 1928).

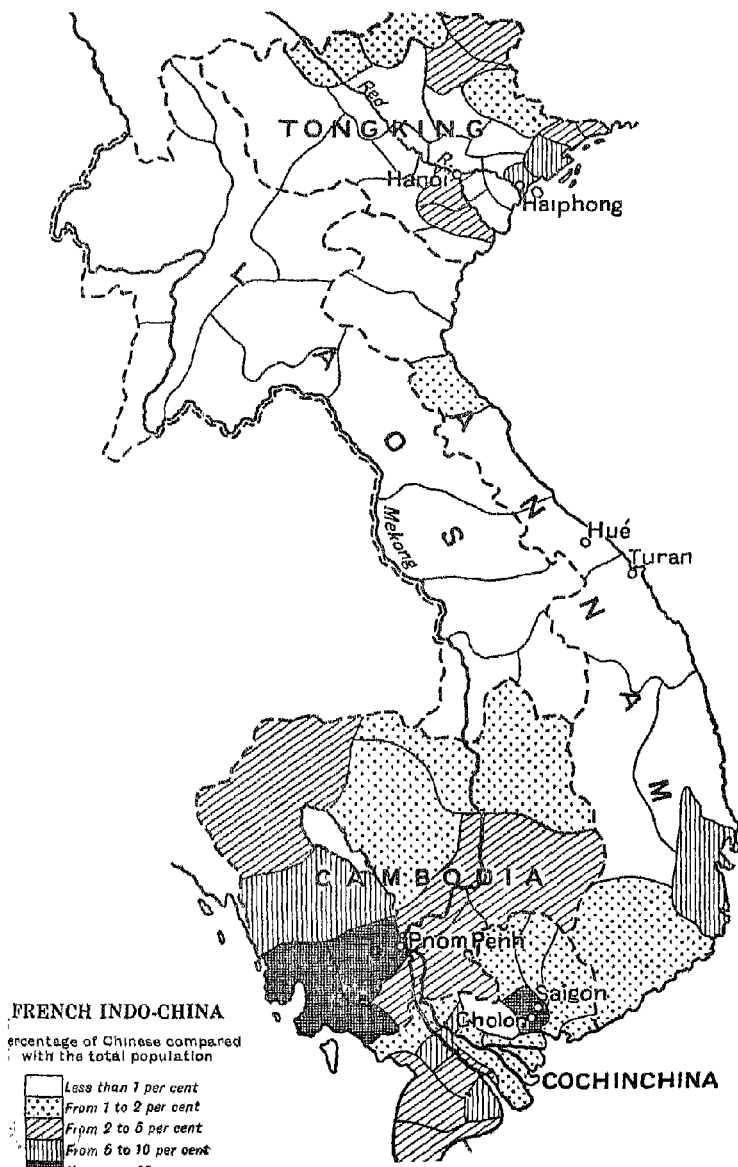
CHAPTER V

AN EMIGRATION OF TRADERS: THE CHINESE IN FRENCH INDO-CHINA*

Chinese influence in Indo-China - Uniform type of emigrants - Chinese monopolies - Trade and housing - The Annamites - Artful "Uncle" - The Chinese and the rice trade - The Congregations - Money and amusements - Chinese complaints of ill-treatment - Decline of their trade predominance - Political dangers.

THE 'Chinese stranglehold in Indo-China,' the 'Chinese cyst,' the 'Chinese excrescence,' the 'Chinese blood-sucker,' such are the commonplace expressions describing the power of the Celestials in Indo-China. It is a power which some have regarded as hostile, remembering the legacy of hate which the Emperor of Middle China, a monarch deposed by the French, has left to the Chinese of to-day and, above all, bearing in mind the revolutionary propaganda which, streaming from Canton to the European colonies, was most likely to find in that nearest to them agents devoted to their cause. What is the significance of this anxiety? In what does the actual power of the Celestial in Indo-

* The position of the Chinese in French Indo-China has been described in Dr. Hepp, *Boundless Indo-China* (pp. 215-262): François du Tesson, *Awakening Asia* and R. Dorgelès, *On the Road to China*.



ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

China consist? Is it as dangerous as is supposed or on the contrary may it perhaps be employed for purposes profitable to French domination?

Chinese influence in Indo-China is not due to their numbers, for their exodus was not a mass movement. British Malaya, although six times less densely populated, admitted in the year 1926 alone almost as many Chinese as are to be found in the whole French colony. Indo-China, where most of the inhabitants paid homage to the Emperor of China for generations and which for nearly three centuries has admitted colonists from Canton, has barely 400,000 Chinese or scarcely $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the total population. Also these groups are very much localized; the Chinese are for the most part established in Cochin China and Cambodia; in the former alone there are 200,000 of them. Tonkin, teeming with its own peoples, and overpopulated, has only 50,000, and Annam 10,000.

It should also be noted that the disturbances in the southern provinces have driven a greater number of Chinese during the last few years to seek, far from revolutions, safety for their persons and their property. New arrivals of Celestials in the ports of Indo-China are more numerous, and departures less frequent than before the War; but the yearly total of arrivals has never exceeded 40,000.

Regulations enforced on the Chinese in Indo-China account for the small number of the emigrants. Formerly they used to complain of the Government

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

restrictions prohibiting the export of any commodity other than rice. To-day they object to the harsh treatment to which importers into the country have to submit and, above all, to heavy duties. Taxes, they say are actually seven times as heavy for a Chinese coolie in Cochin China as for an Annamite. Thus it is impossible for the poor to get into the country and life is difficult even for the well-to-do business men. Most of the Chinese coming to India to-day are sent for by their families or by certain Chinese firms who prefer Chinese employees. The extent of the demand for their services is the only check upon the stream of immigrants. The Cantonese who ask France for refuge are not the class of men who, driven from their homes, venture forth on chance, to be landed at the first harbour touched. There is little that is impulsive or casual in the motives which bring in these new settlers; the movement is conducted on a prearranged system, fills up vacancies in the groups of Chinese and only adds to the communities so far as prudence or resources permit. In this admission of Chinese into Indo-China there is nothing of a peaceful penetration, nothing of the popular Yellow Peril.

In Indo-China their influx is by no means the most miscellaneous or the most representative of the different social classes of China. The reason of their influence is indeed due to the uniformity of the groups. Indo-China is the most remarkable and possibly the most suggestive example of an unbroken and unvarying emigration. It presents a striking instance of the retentiveness by which foreign centres, renewed ceaselessly

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

from without, have succeeded in obtaining actual control over the inhabitants of a country by constant, concentrated work and with practically one aim in view. Most of the Chinese are traders and in this concentration lies their strength. Having attained pre-eminence in trade the Chinese has made himself master of the economic situation in the greater part of Indo-China.

Chinese agriculturists are not very numerous although in Manchuria, Oceania, Burma or even Siam they settle and work on the land.

The French Government has constantly endeavoured to employ the Chinese coolie in the fields; from the early days of the conquest, the first Admiral-Governors of Cochin China resolved that cultivation should benefit from the services of Chinese immigrants, but all to no purpose.

Subsequent attempts have been equally fruitless, and to-day there is a scarcity of labour in the plantations of eastern Cochin China and south Cambodia. The feeble Tonkinese, who has come from his river to tap rubber trees, can scarcely cope with work in the 'red' countries; the Moi, accustomed to wandering at large on his hill-sides, does not easily settle down to a sedentary life in the plain. Skilful workers from abroad must take their places. In the rubber plantations of the Malay States the Chinese proves an excellent worker, more active and more in demand than the Indian. Chinese farm hands swarm in the British colonies; but they do not come to work in the plantations of Indo-China, although it is so close by,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

and, indeed, their services would not be required there.

There are many reasons for this lack of demand. The planters of Cochin China find Chinese labour too expensive,* and near the Equator in all cases of competition between native and Celestial the former is much easier to satisfy than the latter. In Indo-China the Chinese demands even higher wages owing to government taxes. He has to give guarantees when he disembarks and pay a considerable sum down when he is taken on as a labourer. Moreover in Malaya the Chinese can obtain concessions of land on the rubber plantations and become possessed, piece by piece, of the soil which he has cleared, but in Indo-China new concessions of the 'red' ground are not made to aliens. Above all, Indo-China to-day is a land of ricefields rather than plantations. In his own home the Chinese is devoted to his ricefield, but he very rarely returns to it once he has left his native soil. The ricefield, the source of his earnings from time immemorial and the scene of his toil in his own land, very seldom attracts the newcomer.

Yet Chinese farm labourers used to be found and still exist in Indo-China. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the first colonists from Canton to Cochin China settled in the ricefields near the river mouth; they were soldiers driven out by revolutions, adventurers in the service of the Emperors of Annam.†

* Such was the almost unanimous reply given in 1926 by the planters to a Government enquiry.

† In 1680 a Chinese general with 3,000 soldiers settled in Bien-Hoa and Mytho.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

To-day however, Chinese colonies under cultivation are very much localized. The peasants who live in them have no intercourse with the natives on the rice-fields. Two forms of cultivation alone are in their hands, pepper and market-gardening, and of these, in Cochin China and Cambodia, they have practically acquired the monopoly.

Pepper grows along the Gulf of Siam, while the gardens are in the suburbs of such large towns as Cholon, Saigon and Phnom-penh, storehouses of human beings as densely packed as the plants in the fields. In the plain which borders the Gulf, with its many islets, the pepper-plants grow row on row, at regular intervals, entwined round crops like vines. Their strong bare chests, square-set shoulders and great straw hats, round and pointed, show the labourers as obviously Chinese. Almost all the coolies, with the exception of those engaged in the roughest work, are Chinese and practically all the farmers and owners.*

Chinese pepper and mulberry trees are tended with the same exact care as the gardens. On the banks of the Gulf of Siam may be seen the time-honoured methods of their tillage. Each tendril of the pepper trees is the result of extraordinary patience; burnings endlessly repeated, with the ashes regularly sprinkled around each tree, daily spraying against insects, a soil absolutely levelled, trenches and ridges, so that the seeds may be planted at mathematically correct intervals, a tiny stone ledge built under each

* Only one owner is actually French, who however owns the largest property. Total production of pepper (1926) 2,400 tons.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

row, yearly cuttings, harrowings, props frequently renewed — a labour which, like some religious rite, becomes ever more complicated with the passage of time.*

In order to keep up the supply of labour necessary for such methods, Chinese land owners are often obliged to send for their own countrymen. The influx of these people never actually ceases, but is always small. Gardeners come chiefly from Kouang-Tong and the coolies for the pepper-trees mainly from Hainan, sturdy fellows accustomed to hard work in their own wild islands. They come singly or in small parties on the demand of their employers in Indo-China, and until lately used to go home again after some years of work to the plantations of their own country. Many, however, now remain behind, for the lure of ownership keeps them in their land of exile.

From these labour settlements at Cambodia Chinese blood has spread through the country. Men from Hainan or Canton, who formerly came out singly, began to take native women. The Chinese-Cambodian half-caste, born in the pepper fields or market gardens, went off to settle on the ricefields and in the corn-growing districts. The Celestial does not mingle with the natives at work in the fields, though the half-castes have no objection to doing so. This Chinese blood reacts upon that which flows in the veins of the Cambodian rustic, so gentle, good-tempered and easy-going. A great number of the farmhands in Cambodia

* See Chevalier, *Pepper in Indo-China*.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

are half-castes, with fine copper complexions, who have inherited the native's love of the land and village and have acquired from the Chinese a little of his energy and ambition. Descendants of the Chinese in a country such as Cambodia have done good service to agriculture. But in Indo-China the pure-blood Chinese who settles on the land is an exception.

The Chinaman of Indo-China is a trader, for in the Chinese system any other consideration is subordinate to the requirements of trade; it must be rare for any society to possess so distinctive and typical a unity. All emigrants are not traders when they come, for among those who disembark at Saigon, some are peasants driven out by famine from Kouang-Tong or Kouang-Si, or coolies from the great Chinese sea-ports. But nearly all gradually catch the fever of speculation, and become cogs in the great Chinese trading machine.

Throughout history Chinese vessels have traded between the ports of Kouang-Tong and Tonkin, but owing to the monsoons they were obliged to make for the delta at Mekong, at the mouth of the Indian Ocean, the first feeler of the continent of Asia before the Malay Peninsula. When Annamites began to crowd into Cochin China and the rich lands so long uninhabited became colonized, Chinese merchants settled there, and at the end of the eighteenth century established at the first junction of the rivers and the channels of the delta on the eastern route their great centre, Cholon. But as Cholon is continuously grow-

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

ing and has to-day nearly 100,000 inhabitants, groups of Celestials are spreading across the delta. As fast as canals are constructed, and routes opened out (before the French, the Chinese were the chief pioneers of public works), the homes and shops of the Celestial sprang up on their banks.

The very site chosen for Chinese dwellings is an unmistakable proof of the commercial character of their settlements. It is designed to follow in Cochin China and even in Cambodia the great main routes. Cholon, the Chinese capital, extends along the banks of a wide tributary and its branches. On one side are the rice factories with their high chimneys, where men and women, laden with sacks of paddy, tramp in and out; on the other are fronts of buildings low, flat and grey, with Chinese letters here and there to relieve their bleakness. The town has spread around the business houses and the two quays. One of the banks claims more than passing attention, for here are the residential quarters, the workmen's homes and pleasure haunts, where the wealth earned at the canal-side is dissipated in alcohol and opium. But beside Cholon there are Mytho and Vinh-Long on the upper tributaries of the Mekong, and Cantho on the lower; still farther west so recently colonized, on the great modern highways which now run across the new ricefields, are the markets of Soc-Trang and Bac-Lieu. In all these towns the Chinese quarter is to be found on the canal banks or beside the main road; at Cantho, for instance, a town between three canals, Chinese shops facing the quaysides are the centre of

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the city's activities, while the Annamite houses are farther on.

From Cochin China groups of Chinese go up to Cambodia keeping always to the highways and rivers. In Pnom-penh, where the two arms of the Mekong meet and the Tonlé-sap diverges, the Chinese town is in the centre. Up-country, in Cambodia, off the main roads native villages lie hidden with houses raised on piles and spreading banana trees, and there the worthy Cambodians sleep in the shade. As soon as the road opens out with telegraph poles alongside it, the Chinese booth springs up, with its soda-water bottles, umbrellas and flasks of perfume.

From the small shop-keeper to the commission agent-in-chief Chinese are to be found in every stage of trade. Of these the most in evidence is the grocer. On his stall the produce of Far East and of West lie side by side: spirits of rice in large bellying bottles, and Dubonnet or Vermouth; joss sticks to be burnt before the ancestral altar and electric pocket torches; gold and silver paper to wrap presents in, and silks from Roubaix or Tourcoing; candied rose leaves, bamboo shoots, swallows' nests, and French jams.

The Chinese is the connecting link between the European and the native. With his shoddy stock he touts round with the trash of the West, even to the Annamite peasant's hut, the privileged trader who displays in his shop front the combined stocks of two civilizations and dumps down the hybrid mixture at his customers' doors.

Side by side with the petty trader is the small

ASTA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Chinese artisan, who in most cases is trading too. He usually makes and sells direct, without employing a middle-man. In the shops Cantonese and Hakkas, bare to the waist, chatter as they work — work that never seems to stop, going on at night by lamp-light. The Chinese workshop seems never to be idle; potters, whose hutments are chock full of jars of earthenware and pots, shoemakers, lumberers, carpenters, glaziers — a little world which never rests from its toil, and lives by hawking round its own goods.

As a rule, very soon after his arrival, the Chinese, though he may be destitute and out of work, soon contrives to go into business in some small way, first as employee and later, in many cases, as proprietor. His object is to get on quickly. It is even possible in Cochin China for a man entirely without capital to set himself up in trade. The Chinese often launches forth without any capital whatever; he may be able to get goods on credit from some fellow trader among his own countrymen or even from a Frenchman. The creditor knows that the Celestial is too astute not to hold his own and pay him back at the earliest possible moment. A tireless worker, he gradually extends his enterprise, repays his debts and becomes master of his own business.

But Chinese trade is wholly dependent upon native produce; therein lie its importance and danger. Without producing anything whatever, the Chinese controls production. Though he rarely tills the land, he is the ruling force in agriculture. Let others toil

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

on the ricefield, his is the fruit of their work, the benefit of their labour. The sales of Cochin China rice, of fish* and Cambodian skins and of such local products as cinnamon in Annam are entirely in their hands. The rice trade is the most striking example of this enterprise. In the first place, by buying up supplies the Chinese keeps the Annamite labourer entirely dependent upon him. In western Cochin China, long before harvest time, Chinese middle-men come flocking to centres and markets; the agent from the rice factories of Cholon, the small speculator who sets out on chance and journeys from village to village to pick up sack after sack-load of the paddy harvest, the grocer from the neighbouring centre, the chief man who has lent money to the farmer, the owner of the skiff that has sailed up to the paddy field and laden his junk with some measures of grain—all those whose joy it is to turn over their capital in the great speculation of the harvest, a vast crowd which carries the crops townwards almost before they are cut.

Western buyers have not been very successful as yet in getting into touch with the natives. The Annamite purchaser has not been able to make his brother of the ricefield do his bidding. As buyers the Chinese have no competitors; they know the peasant, the *nhagké*, and are well aware of his weaknesses, chief of which is gambling. The Annamite is a born gambler, so also is the Chinese, as indeed are

* Concessions of fisheries, notably in Lake Tonlé-Sap, have been granted them; they also control the export of dried figs.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

all eastern nations; but to the Annamite the game is a childish amusement, with the Chinese it is the greed for gain. When 'Uncle,' greasy and friendly, enters the cottage and has drunk a cup of rice alcohol as a sign of his friendship with the family, he suggests a game. So they play, and the Chinese is always the winner. The Annamite hesitates to pay his debt on the spot; but that is of no consequence, the Chinese will allow him credit! The Annamite has only to grant him a lien on his harvest, or pay him next year in measures of paddy.

Or again, sometimes it is the native who makes the first advances to the Chinese, 'Uncle' posing as his help in trouble. Too thoughtless to look ahead and save, the peasant knows that the Chinese in the grocer's shop round the corner will almost always allow him credit. But the Chinese knows, too, that in suggesting a loan at the right moment he is securing rights on the harvest. The creditor is even at pains not to be repaid all his debt at the next harvest-time. The delay will allow him to increase his debt three or fourfold, to have thenceforth a kind of perpetual right over the peasant and force him to work for his benefit. Attempts are only quite recently being made to establish some sort of agricultural loans to deal with this evil. Legally the Chinese is within his rights. In most cases, too, the dispute does not come before the courts. The Chinese is satisfied merely to threaten and prefers to remain on good terms with his debtor. After each of his visits he takes something away with him, a measure of paddy, the daughter of the house for a concubine,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

or a new contract. The native is still in his debt, and the Chinese finds the delay convenient. He prefers goods to money down; he is a money-lender because he is a merchant; and is more concerned with the possible chances of a future sale than with immediate payment.

But in buying up the paddy, the Chinese risk is not confined to the native's solvency; he speculates, too, on the rise and fall of the market. Most of the time paddy is bought up some months before the harvest; the Annamite farmer prefers to have the money thus. As a rule his debts are troubling him, and even if he is free from debt, he prefers to make sure of his immediate benefit, for he is obliged to hand over to his landlord a fixed quantity of paddy per acre. Such a speculation would be risky for the Chinese if he were not well aware that he was thoroughly secured. In the event of a bad harvest the Celestial's profit is considerable, for paddy then is scarce and the price rises inevitably. But if it prove abundant, the price never falls in proportion. Controlling the market, the Chinese are able, in the event of large supplies, to store up the paddy, keep it in barns and granaries, and regulate prices by controlling distribution.

By their speculations in purchasing, the Chinese at a later stage, are still able to control the market when the rice comes to be sold at Saigon. The profits realized during the first operation enable them to sell at a much lower rate than their rivals and gradually drive them from the market. This explains a state of affairs often noted with astonishment in Indo-China.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

At Cholon, where paddy from the countryside is brought into the factories, the price of rice, relative to the amount of paddy stored, is often higher than at Saigon, where it is only sent for immediate export. That might be assumed to mean a loss on sale, but this the Chinese can stand. By controlling the market beforehand he may have the luck actually to gain on sales which seem to be hardly profitable; his scheme consists in dumping for the export trade. From the time that the paddy has been cut until the rice actually leaves Saigon, most of the product remains under Chinese control.

In Cochin China, where transport is almost entirely by water, the Celestial owns nearly all the junks. Transport is his monopoly; junks covered with trellis or wooden-roofed junks, huge square-set paddy junks, or flat junks for passengers. The Annamites scarcely own any boats in Cochin China, while the French companies' service is negligible. The Celestial who has realised the importance of transport to his trade has invested his savings in these undertakings. Private individuals, landowners and shipping companies own the junks; in fact, all the trade routes of the Mekong delta are under their control.

As soon as it reaches Cholon most of the rice is dehusked by the Chinese. Along the river side, huddled together on the same bank, rise Chinese rice factories with their tall chimneys. Between the paddy-loaded junks and the factories sack-laden coolies come and go all day. The factory owners are mostly Chinese. Some large French firms and numerous

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

small Annamite factories of quite recent date are their only competitors.

In common with all the concerns of the Celestials in Indo-China their industries are branches of great trading companies. As a rule a company advances the whole capital required for the undertaking. In return they receive all the profits from the rice factories. Buildings and machinery are usually treated as security, a stock in trade which they could mortgage. The French factory, on the other hand, is working on its own; sales and profits depend upon production. The Chinese factory is only a part of the whole, a branch of the vast trading confraternity.

Only in exporting do the Chinese traders meet with serious competition. Not for them are the markets west of Singapore, nor may they trade with that port or Batavia to any great extent. Their markets are mainly in China, as Hongkong, from which they supply not only the provinces of the Yang-Tsé, but also a great part of the Far East. In Hongkong, the port for the re-export of rice, in these last years imports from Indo-China have risen rapidly, which was all to the advantage of the Chinese exporters.

A great portion of the internal trade, especially in Cochin China, is in the hands of the Celestial. He owes this leading position to the ease with which he mingles with the natives, to his fondness for speculation, and his prospects of good returns. If he goes bankrupt, he disappears and starts afresh. He may grow rich quickly, for bankruptcy has fewer terrors for him than for other men. If the Chinese traders

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

went on strike, the peasant of Cochin China and the fishermen of Cambodia would find no buyers on the spot for their goods; transport would be insufficient to convey rice or fish over canals and rivers. The economic life of Indo-China would be seriously upset.

Can the Chinese use their economic supremacy for political ends? Strong in his power as a factor in commerce, even indispensable to-day, can he stir up in Indo-China a state of unrest and make it impossible to carry out any law enforced against him? From an economic point of view the Chinese in Indo-China is treated not unjustly, but politically a system of great severity has so far been imposed upon him. Instead of endeavouring to restrict the expansion of Chinese trade, steps have been taken almost exclusively to limit its possible political dangers, and legislation explicitly checks any results of Chinese influence. The Chinese are loud in protest against laws which place them on a different footing to other aliens. They demand equality and reciprocal treatment according to the principles laid down by Sun-Yat-Sen. They claim the appointment of consuls as permitted to the western nations.

The centre of government in the life of the Chinese in Indo-China is still the Congregation, an old-established system, the subject of much study and which doubtless does not actually possess, in its time-honoured existence, the influence it appears to administer. Five great Congregations group the Chinese according to their places of origin; and their chiefs,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

who are elected in each province or settlement, levy taxes on all the members, are responsible for their collection and busy themselves with public interests in general. In Canton, for instance, the Congregation has its pagoda, college, hospital and cemetery. The nominal chief is frequently only a servant. The actual controller, who possesses the real influence, is not known officially to the French Government.

As a matter of fact, the Celestials in Indo-China are grouped in other associations, social rather than local in character, and all the more dangerous from being secret. First come the communities of the leaders, of whose doings but little is known. In 1926 a hospital was opened in Hainan, subsidised by groups of Celestials; in spite of threats to close it forcibly, it proved impossible to obtain the statutes of its foundation. The real groups are not administrative but economic; mutual benefit societies and, above all, syndicates of the professional classes, which keep in the background and are never to be found on the day on which the Government summons them to publish their regulations. In Cholon the employees in the grocers' shops or bazaars, the sewing men, hair-dressers, tailors, dyers, or cook-shop boys are all grouped into syndicates.*

The Chinese have a natural instinct for the group system. Indians on the plantations remain grouped together by an inherited submissiveness, the Japanese in the colonies by a feeling of superiority and tradition, but the Chinese by their love of family and business interest.

* In 1926 there were 70 syndicates of Chinese in Cholon.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

The danger of these Chinese associations, which are even more firmly founded than the administrative bodies, arises from this very difficulty in assimilation, from the emigrants' desire to keep touch with his native country at all costs. Until recently the Chinaman's sole idea in coming to Indo-China was to return home again, for the Celestial family rarely settles permanently and definitely in the colonies. His permanent environment is his business house, his shop or factory rather than the family. Individuals change; a father or a son come and settle in Indo-China and then leave to finish their education, to get married, or simply to revisit, after many years, the land of their ancestors. It is only quite recently that the number of newcomers has actually exceeded those returning home.

The considerable sums of money sent home is a proof of the desire to remain on terms as intimate as possible with the family. A Chinese will not often spend his old age in Indo-China, and if he does not return in his life-time to the ancestral village, he will arrange for his ashes to be conveyed there, when he has the means to do so. As soon as the Resident's permission has reached them, Chinese may be seen kneeling near the graves in the cemeteries of Cochin China, digging up the dead and, under the eye of an official, placing the remains in little coffins, which must wait till they are of a sufficient number to load up a ship.

Formerly Chinese women, having no desire to settle overseas, did not accompany their husbands,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

and the men often brought home to their wives the children of their Annamite mistresses. But nowadays disturbances in Canton have prompted Chinese women to accompany their husbands. In Indo-China there are, on an average, one Chinese woman for two men.* Native women are taken as second wives, or simply as concubines.

Half-castes form, as a rule, no lasting bonds between the Chinese and natives. After one or two generations the half-caste degenerates to the level of the native and has no further intercourse with the Chinese. In Cambodia he settles on the land, quite contrary to the custom of the Chinese. In the towns of Cochin China more than 80,000 half-castes, the 'Minh-Huong,' live near the Annamites. It is difficult for them to acquire the legal status of either the Annamite or the Cambodian. Frequently they do not wish to do so, for if it were granted, they would lose their right of appeal to the French courts and of engaging European lawyers in the many cases which they have to defend. The Government, French or Cambodian, would also lose, for Chinese who are not naturalised have to pay heavy taxes.

Among this section, so powerful and exclusive, secret ideas dangerous to the French Government may easily spread. Neither political nor social matters seem to be particularly engrossing to the Chinese in Indo-China. Among the traders of Cochin China or Cambodia there is no place for the theorist, since they

* But the proportion of female immigrants has lately risen. See *Rapport au Conseil Colonial. Gouvernement de la Cochinchine*, Vol. I, p. 133.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

only came to grow rich and many of them quickly succeed in amassing large fortunes. There are a few primary schools, quite rudimentary in character, one single secondary school, and the Franco-Chinese College at Cholon, all under the direction and superintendence of the French, but no artistic refinement, nothing to rouse the intellect, one sole anxiety – wealth.

His business over for the day, the Chinaman's only thoughts are pleasure and amusement. In endless Cholon, teeming with chattering crowds, or in the hub of other Chinese cities, in centres of gaiety, the whole population is astir in leisure hours. In the streets are the hawkers of foodstuffs – chickens, jellied sucking-pig, cakes of rice or millet or fried fish. On the pavement around squat coolies eating and drinking. All is brightly lit; light streams from the electric lamps on both sides of the road and from the upper floors, where revellers are gathered. There are cafés and restaurants, where staircases of brightly polished brass shine on the passers-by through half-opened doors. The rattling of Mah-Jong counters quickly thrown on tables, the pulling of crackers, the shouting voices still discussing the business of the day, the clattering of cups of spirits or tea, the miauling of Chinese singing girls, the scraping of violins, and sometimes the clash of cymbals echoing from a neighbouring theatre. Then, a little apart, are the quiet villas, where on his divan the rich Celestial is lighting his pipe of opium or, at the end of quiet alleys, dark rooms, where coolies lie on wooden beds and dope

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

themselves with the white smoke smelling of burnt almonds. A civilized people with money to burn and in a hurry for its amusements.

These merchants want to enjoy in peace the wealth they have amassed: consequently in their hearts they hate political agitations. They are too deeply interested in a quiet life and have many good reasons for refusing to support revolutionary propaganda. But in Cochin China there are many Chinese who have no fortune safely secured in the great rice factories of Cholon and among them, into the strange restless world which stirs around the wealth of Cochin China or Cambodia, emissaries from Canton insinuate their way.

All the Chinese of Indo-China are taught to declare for Chinese Nationalism; as a matter of fact, every Chinese the world over expresses these same sentiments. In 1925 at Pnom-Penh on the anniversary of Sun-Yat-Sen's death, all the Celestials in the town marched forth, headed by a band and holding aloft an effigy of the hero of the Revolution. In 1926, permission to hold this celebration having been refused, the shops shut for three days. A manager of a Chinese cinema, who had opened his theatre, was set upon in his own home, and forced to return to his patrons their money and to stop the performances. After the bombardment of Ouan-Sien on the Yang-Tsé the merchants of Cholon and Saigon boycotted English goods. Regular collections are made among the Celestials in the colony and in the clubs of the rich merchants, just as in the unions of the workmen and

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

employees, for the benefit of the Kuomintang Government.

When the Russians were absolute masters at Canton, certain Chinese got themselves appointed agents of the revolutionary government among the Annamites. Early in 1925 an Annamite founded, in connection with the International Union of Paris, a 'League of Oppressed Peoples' at Canton on the same lines as those in India, Java, and the Philippines. Chinese transmitted messages from one country to the other. Forged banknotes printed in Canton were circulated in the Cambodian provinces of Battambang and Kampot via Siam. Prohibited newspapers reached Saigon in every ship that came from China and contraband arms were seized at Cambodia. Strikes for no obvious reasons broke out at Cholon and Pnom-Penh, that of the lumber men and potters at Cholon being the most serious. The Chinese Press at Canton assumed a hostile attitude towards the French Government in Indo-China, countenanced Annamite revolutionaries, and urged the Chinese to protest in the name of the Three Principles of Sun-Yat-Sen against the laws to which they had to submit. 'We are trampled under the iron feet of French Imperialists,' said the paper, *Dan Quoc Nhut Bao*, in the spring of 1926. 'Chinese emigrants in Indo-China are neither free to speak nor hold meetings.' In the same month the paper reported to the Kuomintang the experience of a Chinese who had returned from Indo-China. 'When they arrive at Saigon,' said he, 'the Chinese are treated as prisoners. At night-time native police

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

agents incite guttersnipes to annoy us. 'They look for any excuse to treat us with violence. Such a sight could only be witnessed in Hell.' The delegate also waxes indignant when a poll-tax is levied on the Chinese in the same way as on Malays and natives. 'This government of Indo-China treats us as if we had no country of our own.' He denies that the French have the right to expatriate one of his countrymen within twenty-four hours or to control the elections of the Heads of the Congregation. 'What of the security of our national dignity!' he exclaims. He concludes with the inevitable reminder of the Principle of Sun-Yat-Sen — reciprocal treaties. 'We must conclude a new agreement with the French, and if they violate it, let us also break it without scruple.'*

When the Russians were driven out and their influence in the Republic declined, the tone of the Cantonese Press grew more restrained, and hostile demonstrations were less frequent. There were no more efforts to unite with the revolutionaries of Annam. In the new treaties about to be concluded demands were limited to reciprocity, that is to say the same treatment for the Chinese in Indo-China as for the French in China. Shortly before the writer's arrival at Canton, a great demonstration had been held to insist upon the return to China of the French territory of Kouang-Tcheouwan, but there was no mention of Indo-China. At Nankin we heard General Chang-Kai-Chek declare that China had absolutely no ambition with regard to Indo-China; all that

* *Don Quoc Nhut Bao*, April 13th, 1926.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

concerned her was the treatment of her nationals there, and for these she continued to demand equality of treatment. After attempting to form a revolutionary union to embrace all the Annamites, the Chinese Government adopted a policy of national counter-claims, of interest only to the Chinese.

The chief safeguard against the political danger arising from the presence of Chinese in Indo-China, one more effective than any legal restrictions, lies in the decline of their economic influence. For some past years this pre-eminence seems to be very appreciably diminishing. In the first place, the Annamites have endeavoured to react against the 'uncles.' The consequences of this hostile movement must not, of course, be exaggerated; before the French rule it existed in the hatred of the Emperor of Annam's subjects of the Chinese tyrant, and is now aroused in the debtors' envy of their creditors, of peasants' envy of the corn merchants, or small shop-keepers of the directors of the great business firms – the envy of a whole people depending directly for the sale of their products on a minority more active than themselves and whose places they cannot fill.

The Annamite is not successful in trade. 'We are too romantic and too easily influenced,' said one of their leading statesmen in an interview. The Annamite's wits are too apt to go wool-gathering; he is unable to concentrate. Then, too, he is proud and refuses to condescend to act as intermediary in business transactions, even provisionally. Finally, he has no

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

trading instinct in his blood. Whenever he has to compete with gatherings entirely composed of commercial men, he cuts a very poor figure. A commercial mind is not formed in one or two generations, and it is still more difficult to form a community of merchants whose members can rely upon each other for mutual support if need be. The rivalry between Chinese and Annamites has frequently broken out in strife and quarrels. In 1919 as the result of a trivial dispute between the two races in a coffee house at Saigon, certain Annamites in the town decided to boycott Chinese goods. An Annamite bank and trading company were inaugurated. But the Annamite does not do battle with the Chinese in Indo-China with impunity. The latter resolved to demand immediate payment of arrears from all the native debtors. The movement flickered out forthwith. Later on, in August 1927, at Hai-Phong, in consequence of a petty quarrel between some native and Chinese women, Tonkinese dockers invaded the Chinese quarter, robbed some dozens of the houses and burnt down factories; many dead and a hundred wounded were left on the scene. Even without resulting in violent outbursts numerous incidents have occurred in the villages and the countryside. Masked natives rob Chinese merchants; acts of piracy and of summary vengeance to individuals or wayfarers occur on the highways of Cambodia as violent as on the passes at the Upper Tonkin frontier.

These quarrels however are merely local and trifling, with no political significance. The Annamites are for

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

ever telling anyone who cares to listen to them that the quarrels are neither racial nor spontaneous. There have even been occasions when Chinese and Annamites have made common cause to withstand some regulations oppressive to both alike. A notable instance was when they resolved, by mutual agreement, to prevent the French monopoly of paddy transport in the Saigon harbour being carried into effect.

In any case, the embitterment of the Annamites does not imply any serious danger to Chinese supremacy. The chief means of defence against this tyranny are not to be found in politics or natural antipathy, but like the Chinese influence itself, in economics.

Considered in this light, Chinese predominance in trade has been undermined. In a country such as Cochin China, itself an economic dependency of the Chinese, signs of decline are beginning to appear; especially in the rice trade, formerly their monopoly, though not as yet in the buying up of the paddy. The agricultural bank, founded in 1926, has not been established long enough to release the Annamite farmers from their debts to 'uncle.' But in the work of husking the Chinese no longer hold the monopoly. Apart from certain large French rice factories which were built some years ago, the small factories, some of which belong to Annamites, are growing more and more numerous, in serious competition with the great Chinese undertakings.

In only two years, from 1924 to 1926, the number of rice works rose from forty-six to fifty-six, and these now have certain advantages which enable them to

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

produce more cheaply. Supplies are obtained more readily, purchases are easier to check, overhead expenses not so high, plant is less costly, and supervision of the mill less complicated. But the development of the small rice factory is almost entirely due to the change in marketing. The Chinese houses are usually connected with the exporting companies; the ports to which the Chinese export are those of speculative trade. The fluctuation in the price of the paddy is not regulated by the dues at the port of departure, but by those of the port of landing. Hongkong is a typical instance. It has now been closed to the Chinese for several years and the exports have gone to other less important ports; small buyers have multiplied at the expense of the large purchasers and the increasing number of smaller markets has led to a distribution of production into correspondingly fewer hands.

But the chief cause of the decline of Chinese influence is the change in economic life of Indo-China. The Chinese lives on the produce of a land where methods of cultivation are as old as the hills. Rice-growing, pepper, fish and gardening are entirely in his hands. But other crops have been introduced, such as rubber, cotton, coffee, tea and palm oil. Modern methods and crops required for industry demand a westerner's skill. In Malaya many of the important planters are Chinese, whereas in Indo-China the system of concessions leaves little room for the alien. Radical changes in cultivation, which are bringing new life to the tropical countries, are being applied in Indo-China, but the Chinese has no part

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

in it. He sees the plantation, one of the main sources of his wealth, slip from his grasp.

This is the most deadly blow struck at Chinese pre-eminence. The French have now begun to oust him, and French trade has expanded, thanks to the assistance of a local French Bank. On the other hand, their trade had always been the chief source of the Chinese community's wealth and enterprise.

Unrest in Canton seems to have settled down for the time being. The immediate political danger has been dispelled and any revolutionary alliance of Celestials and Annamites is unlikely, while ever since the breaking off of relations between Nankin and Moscow, Russian propaganda is making less headway in Indo-China. Nevertheless, grouped and disciplined as they are, the Chinese constitute a distinct possibility of conflict.

The real cure does not lie in severe political enactments which offend the pride of the Chinese and turn even the quieter spirits among them into grumblers. Such laws will never stop the formation of secret societies, the issuing of mysterious orders and carrying on surreptitious intercourse with China. There is no longer any valid excuse for refusing the Chinese their own consuls or denying them legitimate satisfaction for their self-esteem.

The only effective cure is to free native produce from the Chinese stranglehold. There should be a well-organized system of agricultural loans to release the peasant from the Chinese money-lender, instruction for the native in the principles of commerce, so as

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

to allow him to deal with Annamite traders and dispense with the Chinese middle-man, and encouragement of his attempts to set himself up in business, especially in the small rice factories almost daily being built. Native trade would be developed at the expense of Chinese and not of the French.

The maintenance of an immigrant minority with vast trading influence as an intermediary between the governing nation and the governed is common enough in the East. In India, between the English and Indians, we have the Parsees of Bombay; in Egypt the Greeks, Syrians and Levantines, between the British and Egyptians; in Indo-China, at Malacca and Java, between French, Anglo-Saxons or Dutch and the natives, we have the Chinese. These foreign trading communities invariably want peace, but everywhere between them and the Westerners, are signs of an inevitable commercial competition, intensified by racial rivalry. In Indo-China this danger is increased by the nearness of China and by the utter impossibility of mutual understanding between the two communities confronting each other, a misunderstanding more embittered here than elsewhere. Between the Chinese and the French there is no exchange of ideas, intercourse or even of speech. Superficial political measures exasperate the Chinese sense of grievance and add to the dangers of competition. A better policy would be to try to check the predominant position which the Chinese still holds in certain parts of Indo-China, and while admitting the necessity of his presence, prevent him from becoming indispensable to the prosperity of the country.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHINESE IN BRITISH MALAY STATES: ENTERPRISE AND PROGRESS

Early Chinese immigration to British Malaya – Chinese enterprise and success; their interests protected – Chinese development of rubber and tin – Methods of working in the mines – Chinese prosperity.

THE migration of the Chinese to Manchuria was a vast movement of human beings, of destitute refugees to provinces still undeveloped; on the other hand, emigrants to Indo-China came from a higher social status, and though small in numbers were powerful and came deliberately, as they had done for centuries, having acquired predominance in trade. Those who flock to British Malaya are of a more modern type, men of enterprise with no homes of their own, who have come to a new country to work, and as quickly as possible rise from a life of exacting toil to wealth. It is a migration of independent workers, who have followed capital to a land of prosperity, to profit from its investment and adapt themselves to the most modern methods.

Intercourse between the Sons of Heaven and the

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Malay Peninsula dates far back into history. As long ago as the fifth century the annals of the Chinese Empire record the arrival of numerous Chinese at Siam and Malacca. Cantonese merchants are known to have paid heavy taxes to the sovereigns of Malacca, and these in turn sent many tribesmen to the Empire of China. An eighteenth century Malayan record compares Chinese music at the royal festivals at Perak, 'to the croaking of frogs in a marsh after rainfall.'* But the emigration of Chinese in large numbers and at regular intervals towards British Malaya is of more recent date and the transformation of their economic activity there has been sudden, only dating from the last few years.†

They found a new country with no local traditions — such could hardly be expected with merely records of Malaysians scattered through the jungle tilling leisurely and agreeably beside the rivers, beneath the sun and rains of the Equator. A new country, or at any rate one where scarcely a thought was given to the past, where any bold and great enterprise was possible, in short a virgin country. It was a country where the towns to be built could rise up like the mushroom growths of America, haphazard and free from the trammels of tradition; where harbours could be made, trading routes opened out and lands cleared without any influence of the past; where men, having nothing

* See Song ong Siang, *One Hundred Years History of the Chinese in Singapore*, p. 2.

† See S. E. Nathan, *The Census of British Malaya, General Description of British Malaya*, p. 77.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

to respect, could make any innovation that they pleased. The jungle is more readily adapted for an economic revolution than the ricefield, and the empty, virgin forest more suitable than old and crowded villages for the birth of great towns. The rapid increase of the Chinese population in the Peninsula is the proof of its amazing economic development.

Even more than is the case in Manchuria the great number of emigrants to British Malaya is due to the country's natural wealth and its recent development. At the beginning of the century the jungle spread over almost the whole Peninsula, as it still does to-day over the eastern and hilly districts.

Tin was worked as a speculation by the Chinese practically without assistance and rubber has been only grown for the last thirty years. But as soon as the jungle began to open out, western gold poured in streams into the virgin countries. Methods of working were as yet untried and already the Peninsula had proved an attractive investment for capital on a large scale.*

As the tin mines and rubber plantations were more intensively developed, more men, especially Chinese, were urgently needed for these rich lands. Only during the years of war was there any falling off in numbers, which had been growing since the beginning of the twentieth century. After the Armistice emigration at once began again; between 1920 and 1925 the average number of Chinese landing in Singapore

* The value of exports per head of inhabitants was recently higher than in any other country.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

was 170,000, in 1926 there were 348,600, and 359,000 in 1927; the yearly number of immigrants is now one-tenth of the total population of British Malaya.*

Of late years the majority of these have settled in Malaya which in 1927 absorbed more than 60 per cent of the Celestials who had come in search of work. That love of adventure and ambition are the immigrants' chief motives is clear from the small proportion of women, which, far from increasing during the last ten years, as in Indo-China, Manchuria, Java, or Siam since the Chinese Revolution, has shown a marked tendency to decrease. For every hundred men living in British Malaya in 1919 there were only 31 women, and in 1927 not more than 23.† Malaya is a land where men rise rapidly in social position, of wealth acquired by the sweat of the brow, and of struggles for success, which call for independence, versatility and the spirit of adventure. Women and children would merely be a check and hindrance.

In Malaya the basis of society is the individual, the worker, or one might almost say the gang – the group system rather than the family. The emigrants consist almost entirely of manual labourers, but labourers who are comparatively free and, to do them justice, take a wide view of this luxuriant, tropical land, recently opened to western exploitation.

* An excellent summary of Chinese immigration to British Malaya will be found in A. Toynbee's *Survey of International Affairs into Tropical Territories in the Pacific Area* (1928).

† But the percentage of women immigrants has slightly increased of late years.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Workers and labourers in Indo-China are rarely Chinese, in contrast to British Malaya, where they form the most important section of the Chinese community. The development of the resources of Malaya is partly in their hands, but output, too, is very largely the result of their efforts.

This difference in the class of emigrants is due to the two different systems of law. In Indo-China legal restrictions are numerous. At Singapore the Celestial is free to disembark, or at any rate he has only to submit to the same regulations as Europeans.* The only emigrants to be refused admittance are those without resources or who, having borrowed from private persons the cost of their passage, might possibly be unable to repay it. In fact, Malaya is one of the few colonies in the world where there are no special regulations for coloured workers.

During their residence in the Peninsula the Chinese are equally free from special government taxation. They pay the same taxes as Europeans or Indians, have the right of ownership of land and, above all, may be granted concessions to lay out as plantations or work the mines. They have only to apply for licences which are rarely refused. The English official appointed to deal with Chinese questions, the "Protector of the Chinese," acts as administrator and police agent, but does not interfere with trading. The Chinese may conduct their businesses in the same way as any other inhabitants and trade restrictions are no more onerous in their case than for the officials of the country themselves.

* Criminals, sick or destitute are alone excluded.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

The races, who have come overseas to grow rich quickly in this tropical forest, are free to compete one with another. The Malay Peninsula, that long arm of land stretching into the Indian Ocean, has often been called the common frontier where Indians, Chinese, Dutch, English and French all meet. But they do so without friction. 'It is a remarkable fact,' says Mr. Ormsby Gore, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in Mr. Baldwin's Government, in his report on Malaya, 'to find in the mixture of races of which Malaya is composed a complete absence of antagonism, a mutual toleration and universal goodwill.' Such a case is undoubtedly without parallel: men are less unfriendly, because they have less to do with each other. Natural resources are rich enough to allow the various groups, each within its own sphere, to devote themselves to the task of realizing their ambitions by their own efforts, without having to thrust another from his place and profit by his failure.

Under these new and luxuriant natural conditions quarrels between races are as uncommon as quarrels of class in the United States a century ago. The races are mutually unaware of, rather than opposed to, each other. The Malayans, at home in their houses by the river-side or near the towns, the Indians in groups on the plantations, the Chinese, who have imported fresh vigour to the whole economic life of the country, and the Whites who govern or are engaged in important business concerns—all have but one tie in common, to get the upper-hand for the time being, or carry out their business dealings.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Politically, the British are all powerful, but economically they frequently allow their positions to be snatched away from them.

There are no restrictions in British Malaya to keep the Celestial from the plantation and the mine, as in Indo-China. The economic revolution, due to the development of tropical lands, has had its effect upon him. He was once reproached for maintaining himself as a trader on a foreign land by exacting outrageous interest on long-standing debts, for following as an alien peasant so meticulously the antiquated systems by which his ancestors tilled their ricefields, of hiring himself as a coolie doing menial duties overseas. But he has now learnt, when the chance was afforded him and no regulation barred his path, to hold his own in modern industries and to adapt himself to the methods and enterprises, which other men have transplanted to this land still so new, enterprises which little by little give the real power to those who have mastered them.

Many of the rubber plantations and tin mines in Malaya are to-day controlled by the Chinese and their development is largely due to their enterprise. The coolies who tap the trees and those who wash the metallic sands are Chinese, and so also is the chief planter or the chief director, who has quickly amassed a large fortune through the sale of these commodities.

Chinese labour on the plantations is less important than Indian. But by their toil in the strenuous harvest season and their high standards of working, their

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

contribution to the country's wealth is certainly equal to that of the immigrants from the Deccan.

In clearing the land the Chinese work with enthusiasm. The mountain-sides of Manchuria, the jungles of Borneo or Sumatra and even the virgin forests of distant islands in Oceania yield to the axes of these tireless yellow men. The luxuriant lands of Asia should gradually present the appearance of uniform hillocks, an endless vista with grey stones and here and there the tombs of Southern China. In the battle against Nature, who threatens to subdue all before her, Chinese gangs working all over Asia are making successful progress. Throughout the Peninsula the worthy Malaysians set up their villages in the shade of the lofty forests; the Chinese fell trees, lay out plantations, open up mines, and found towns. The Malaysians seek the shelter that Nature affords them, while their rivals transform and overcome her. Doubtless the extent of Malayan land wrested from the forests is still very small, but each time the jungle is driven back the achievement is due to the Chinese. Sometimes they cut down trees slowly one by one, sometimes they mark out part of the forest, felling the trees around in a circle and burning down the rest in a vast conflagration. When a Westerner wants to extend his rubber plantations at the expense of the bush or improve the jungles he has recourse to gangs of Chinese.

He usually turns to the same source to tap the rubber. The Chinese is an energetic, skilful worker, but he has his faults. In the first place, say the experts,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

he is too active with his hands and often destroys a tree which ought to be tended. Then he costs more than the Indian, who is content with a fixed daily or weekly wage. The Chinese insists upon payment by result, which is more profitable for his energy and work. He thus earns higher pay than the Tamal, whose wages he can earn three times over in one day. Finally, he is an unreliable worker. The gangsters, who recruit the Chinese labourers for the planters, know well how little he can be relied upon. They keep on a plantation a fixed number of men, but these men are never the same. The Chinese has the faults of his good qualities. Ambitious and enterprising, he tries to improve his position as soon as his savings enable him to do so; he prefers to work for himself rather than for another; he often comes to some agreement with the other coolies in his gang, and off they go in large companies to husk on their own account, or plant the rubber trees in their regular rows. They support themselves on whatever comes to hand, as they must wait several years until tapping can begin.

In British Malaya, as in Java and the Dutch Indies, are many Chinese developing the rubber plantations. Generally these are very small and not as yet worked on scientific principles. But there are a great many of them, and according to the most competent authorities their output exceeds a third of that of all British Malaya.* Far from diminishing, their numbers and acreage increase appreciably every year.

* See *A Review of the Trade of British Malaya* in 1928, by L. B. Beale, p. 19.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Successful traders, tin-mine owners and Singapore bankers invested their capital at the time of the boom in the rubber plantations. It should, however, be noted that here again most of the Chinese who cultivate the plantations on their own account started life as coolies and have themselves toiled at their task, having risen by dint of hard work and economy. Formerly gangsters on western plantations, they have deserted the scenes of their labour to open up a plantation in Asia, a small one at first, but growing every day. By long practice they have mastered the planter's duties with all the skill and difficulties which they involve.

But the Chinese development of tin has been in the past, and is still, far more important than his work in rubber production. In the latter industry he is merely the most highly skilled worker and the foreman of the gangs, whereas in the mines the rank and file of the labourers are Chinese. Too easy-going, too little used to a variety of methods, the Indians, so numerous on the plantation, are but rarely to be found in the mines, where scarcely 7 per cent of the labour comes from India. Almost all the miners are Chinese; in 1928, 97,000 of them were working in the tin-mines of British Malaya, practically 90 per cent of all the labour employed.

In Malaya the Chinese formerly exploited the tin-mines just as it was he who cleared the jungle. Gangs of Celestials, like the old gold-diggers at the beginning of the last century, came to the Peninsula to dig for tin. To the adventurous spirit, tin had its magic

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

affinity, its unaccountable preferences and aversions which had to be learnt. It possessed a power which must be coaxed forth, a strength commanding respect. All sorts of rituals and prohibitions controlled the intercourse of the miners with the ore. Like the Faithful at the Buddhist pagodas, the miners, if they wore shoes, had to remove them before entering the mine. Quarrels, games of chance, voices loudly raised, words spoken in jest, were all taboo in the neighbourhood of the mines; they would have offended the authority of the place.* Many of the early Chinese processes for working the tin sands are still to-day in use. Work is often done by hand and by individuals working apart. It is usually an open mine, such mines being very common in the Peninsula. The working is very primitive. The men are provided with round hollow sieves, with which they flounder in ponds, pools or rivers and scrape the sandy, tin-laden bottoms. Each shakes the soil as he collects it and so the water percolates; thus the sand receives its first cleansing, none too thorough but quite effective. This simple method is chiefly carried out by women. Working whole hours together, with their black skirts tied round their waists and handkerchief on their heads to protect them from a sun that beats down like lead, paddling up to their knees in the stagnant waters, they look as if they were shrimping.

Sometimes ordinary coconuts serve as receptacles. This process, the simplest imaginable, as it does not even require special tools, is still very widely practised.

* See Scrivenor, *A Sketch of Malayan Mining* (1928).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

It requires a special permit, and 7,500 applications for licences were made in the year 1927 alone.

At a later stage other kinds of tools, such as agricultural implements, are utilised with very slight changes. By the side of the waterfalls or rapids the Chinese may be seen pounding with heavy poles the metal-bearing rocks jutting out into the rivers. The light matter is carried away by the water and the tin lies deep under the stones, which partly obstruct the current. The rods are generally just the ordinary iron-tipped poles used for husking rice. Sometimes Chinese may be seen working at holes dug in the soil to bring the sand to the surface by a foot-pedal, a wheel with carrier cups, like those used for irrigation.

Owing to the limited nature of each working the processes of extracting the tin are greatly varied. Formerly all the concerns were very small affairs and these are the most numerous to-day; just as on the small farms, so with the small mines, it is impossible to employ machinery. It is a difficult matter to instal heavy steam-dredges, gravel pumps with elaborate scaffoldings or powerful monitors. On the other hand, Chinese equipment can be taken anywhere, set up on rickety platforms or dragged over broken ground. It is quite easy to transport a foot-mill or a little box to wash the sand; an ox-cart is quite enough to shift all the materials required. From time immemorial leaders of the Chinese gangs, half adventurers, half workmen, have come and scraped up the surface of the soil. In the midst of luxuriant forests are vast clearings, with fairways flattened out, trodden down

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

and smoothed by the patient enterprise of the Chinese. The working is in many cases only surface-deep. Sometimes western concerns have been set up to dig down in the sites already occupied by the Celestials.* On the other hand, Chinese miners have very often come and worked on alluvial ground which Europeans had already exploited. They scraped up the leavings, the unexplored circuits and the sand that had not been thoroughly washed.

For some years past the small Chinese workings have been in a very critical position. As the output of Malayan tin has increased considerably, prices have fallen appreciably. Production costs in concerns without much capital are much higher than in the great works provided with powerful machinery. A radical change of technique was a matter of life and death for the Celestials. The Chinese miner had to go under or adopt new methods.

Many of the men who work the mines have installed new machinery. Small groups, mining apart from their fellow workers, are still to be found. But they come to carry the sand to those of their compatriots who have already enlarged their businesses and who tackle the process of washing and subsequent operations on a larger scale.

Vast Chinese tin-mining concerns are to be met with to-day. The Chinese had long been digging extensively in the soil of Malaya. Mostly open mines, but hollowed big and wide. Their difficulty was to bring up the metalliferous sands from the bottom to

* Scrivenor mentions the tin mines of Barut, near Taiping, which the Chinese conceded to the British.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the higher level. On steep wooden foot-bridges thrown from one level to another women passed in single file, each with two baskets of sand on her shoulder balanced at the end of a pole. These simple arrangements are still to be found, but methods are less primitive, for man is now replaced by machinery in transporting the sand. An endless chain working on two wheels, one above and the other below, carries little buckets which pour out at the top the mineral picked up at the bottom. Or a pressure-pump raises the soil from below. The Chinese have shown an amazing ingenuity in perfecting the methods of working. Scaffolds of extremely complicated construction rise up to the height of great buildings, bewildering affairs with wooden stems, cleverly balanced but very insecure. Already there are signs of progress due to their amazing inventive genius, but they have not as yet acquired stability in industrial technique or the gradual achievements of modern organization.

Since the War the Chinese have adopted the most modern mechanical methods of their neighbours, the British or French concessionaries. Tanjong-Taolang and Beatrice, two of the largest mines in British Malaya, are in their hands, the former under their management, while the other is controlled, managed and developed entirely by them. In addition to great numbers of gravel-pumps there are also monitors which shoot over the sands great jets of water at high pressure.*

* See Monthly Bulletin of Statistics in the Mining Industry, March, 1929, p. 53.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Stamp batteries grind and pound the ore extracted from the soil, on the sorting tables coolies deal with the different qualities, while powerful magnetised machines are also used in the separation processes.

The Chinese themselves construct the wooden scaffolding, made on a complicated system typical of their own character. But the machines and motors they import from America, from the most up-to-date firms in the New World or Europe. To run their gravel-pumps the Chinese use Diesel engines of an average of 150 h.p. And they themselves repair and keep them in working order in many cases.*

In spite of the competition of the great British, French and American enterprises the Chinese output is to-day greater than that of all the other tin-mines of Malaya together. In 1928 they produced 51 per cent of the total extracted and actually 18 per cent of the world's total output.†

In smelting, however, the Chinese have had to abandon their small workings without as yet being able to introduce bigger ones in their place. Formerly the tin was mixed with coal in clay furnaces in wooden sheds. These furnaces were ventilated by a pipe under pressure, slag and smelted tin being carried down through a hole drilled at the bottom. The tin was then separated and cast into flat ingots. To-day the smelting of tin is concentrated as is the working of the ore. But this branch of the industry is not in the

* See *A Review of Trade of British Malaya in 1928*, by L. B. Beale.

† See Monthly Bulletin of Statistics of the Mining Industries, March, 1929, p. 51.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

busy hands of the Celestial, as the Chinese tin is entirely smelted by two large firms on the coast.

With increasing means of working, organization, too, has changed. Small adventurers of the past, wandering round on the chance of work, have joined forces and the groups thus formed in the great mines are systematically organised. In the Beatrice Mine each gang is engaged at its own particular work. In the small concerns all the workmen share the same lodging, a huge wooden shed, its roof thatched or covered over with palms or even corrugated iron. In the one long hall each man's place is indicated by his mattress and netting. At meal-times, on tables in front of the doors, the workers eat their rice, dried beans or occasionally meat. But the shed also serves as a store for the sands or tin and the washing is often done under the very roof where the men live. The gang or company are all of the same class, as the mine is often worked on a communal system, the coolies being directly interested in output.

In the great Chinese and western concerns alike the men have been taken on solely for the work. But each gang specialises in its particular task. In communal life the system is quite different. Lodgings are smaller, if not better built, and resemble those to be seen in a vast workers' city of primitive type. Reserves are removed to some distance from the miners' huts. Except during working hours a miner is no longer a factor of the group to which he belongs, so that he finds it easier to get away from the gang in which he was a mere cypher. A coolie taken on at a big mine

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

frequently leaves his group with two or three of his fellows and goes off to form a gang on his own account and work, on some atavistic system, a small concern of his own, having turned his back on the vast modern undertaking.

He has, however, by now learned modern methods. More than one Chinese commercial magnate in Malaya started as a foreman or even as a coolie in some great concern. In the history of the progress of Chinese skill and enterprise in British Malaya, a most remarkable feature is the manner in which they work their way up from the bottom, foreman and workmen alike having mastered western processes by actual experience. In this colony there is no class of young Chinese corresponding to the young men fresh from the Engineering Schools of America or Europe. There is no Chinese intelligensia, to come and revolutionise methods by taking over the control of a mine. The only similar cases are when Westerners, as a rule only provisionally, work a mine owned by some wealthy Chinese. Such an agreement is generally encouraged by the miners themselves, who have seen European methods when they worked in a western mine and who proceed at once to follow them.

Thanks to this facility in adopting new methods the Chinese has maintained, and frequently increased, his influence in the business world. In trade and industry he closely follows his western rivals.

In Malaya the small local trader doubtless still predominates, for here, as elsewhere, the Chinese grocer, silk-merchant, tailor, or potter has swarmed

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

into every city. A class of Chinese, half artisan, half middle class, now inhabits the little towns that have sprung up in recent years in the jungle, along the railway line or on the coast, towns ever echoing with the ceaseless activity of the Chinese, where the din of work goes on all night long and the noise of merry-making till after day-break. Already the roads are wider than in the Motherland, for Chinese energy and ambitions seem to have here more room to expand.

But the great leaders of Chinese trade have settled in the harbours. Singapore is not only the port of export for rubber and tin for the whole of British or Dutch Malaya, but is also the largest harbour for the trans-shipment of Indian, Chinese and Japanese merchandise. Here some of the busiest concerns are Chinese, which compete with their rivals from England or Holland for the conquest of the Far East markets. Huge stores displaying the latest novelties have also been built by the Chinese.

They have also started factories on the American system, of tinned fruits to cinema films. The richest man in Malaya is the famous Chinese, Tan-Ka-Kee, who adds new branches to his enormous business every year. He manufactures every conceivable article in rubber from babies' nipples to motor tyres. His chief lines are leather and rubber goods, but he also deals in clothes, straw hats and wooden shoes.*

Having grown wealthy by the same methods as the Western colonists, the Celestials gradually attained their standard of requirements, tastes, and civilization.

* See Ormsby-Gore, *Report on British Malaya* (1929).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

In Singapore as in Saigon or Batavia, Chinatown, or Bangkok, one finds their noisy restaurants, and the number of Chinese cinemas is now higher than in any other Chinese town. Films showing doughty deeds in America, and sometimes, too, adventures in their own country, are becoming serious rivals to the opium pipe or the songs of the little singing girls in their tightly fitting dresses of white silk. The huge motor cars, proceeding from the residential districts to the business quarters or pleasure haunts, are more often occupied by Chinese than Europeans. After having been forced to adopt western skill the Celestial is also acquiring western tastes and outlook.

Malaya is one of the most typical examples of a civilization being absorbed by its most material and practical elements. No longer dreading the disturbances of civil war, securely established in a rich, 'young and fruitful country, which thrives on capital from all parts of the world, entirely freed from the fetters of politics, the Chinese have inevitably concentrated their efforts on their chances of success.

Western influence penetrates into China chiefly through the cultured classes by means of books and formulas more or less readily assimilated. The westernizing of Malaya spreads, because its inhabitants have adopted technical processes more thoroughly perfected than their own, organizations that are more effective and all the methods of enterprise which modern ingenuity places at man's command for the most minute needs of his struggle for existence.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

At any rate, they have absorbed this influence, and so thoroughly that to it they owe their success. Perhaps the future of the Chinese lies, properly speaking, beyond the seas — not by reason of material gains of the moment, but rather because of the efforts which these advantages demand, the evolution in technique which they exact, and because they have adapted to their own uses the economic system of the West.

PART III
INDIAN EMIGRATION

CHAPTER VII

INDIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS EMIGRATION

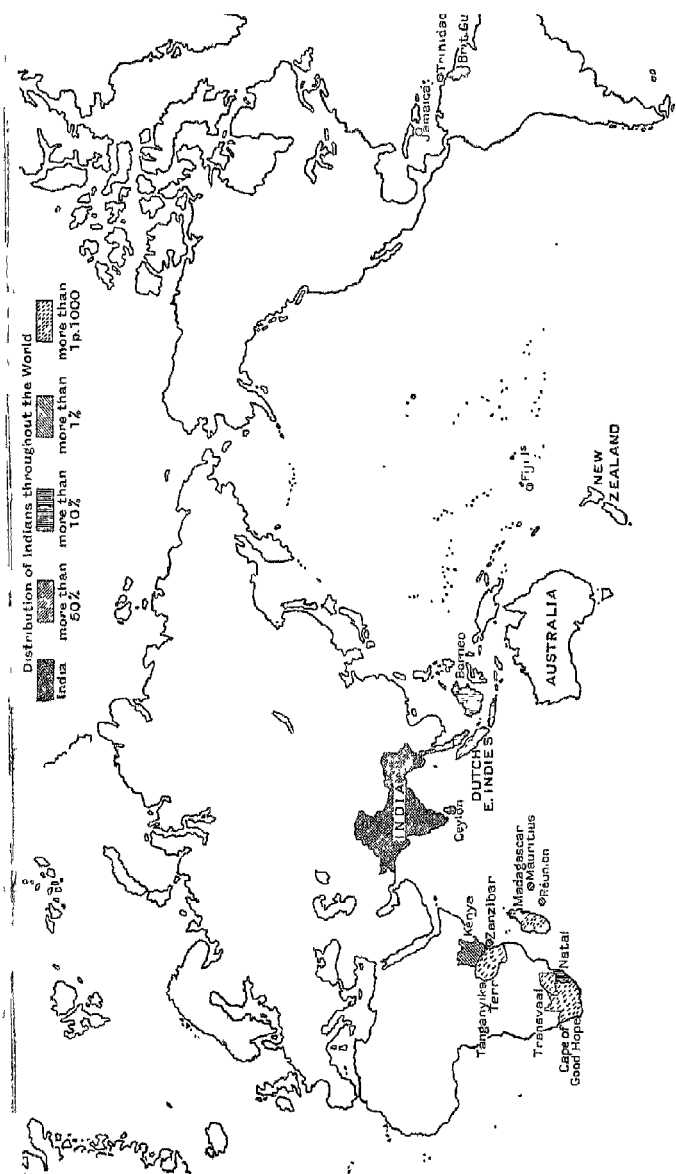
Indian resentment of colour bar – Indentured and other early emigration – Government regulations – Assisted and voluntary emigration – Moslem traders – Dominions' measures to exclude them – Union of Indians in protest.

As in China and Japan, emigration, especially of late years, has become one of the most serious of India's economic and political problems. It is economic, since a remedy must be found for unemployment and under-feeding, where there have been famines in the land throughout all ages, where human beings, crowding on the irrigated plains, reach overwhelming numbers, and the developments of western machinery though offering new chances, have left many hand-workers idle. It is also a political problem, for the legal restrictions, which are gradually keeping the peoples of Asia confined within their own countries, are enforced no less severely on Indians. The prejudice against colour denies him and the Japanese alike access to nearly all the lands where they would like to earn their daily bread. The active section of Indian opinion bitterly resents such treatment; a glance at any Indian paper will show the importance they attach to this grievance. The question is debated at every national congress. Every speech of

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the Viceroy at the opening of the Chambers is sure to contain some passage expressive of hope of agreement towards the solution of the problem. Most of the social or political societies of Indians have set down the question on their programmes. The society of the 'Servants of India,' composed of Indians who bind themselves by monastic vows to devote themselves to saving their country, suggests to its members the problem of emigration as one of the chief objects of their studies; its president, Srinivasa Sastri, has been spending much of his time in visits to the British Dominions, where he studies the conditions of immigration. Most of the political leaders have allowed their names to be associated with this question. Before the War Gandhi had gained his prestige in South Africa by a political campaign, which terminated in an agreement with General Smuts on the Indian question. Meetings to discuss the problem and to protest against its present solution are becoming more numerous. The Indian views with alarm the iron ring (as he sees it) which keeps him confined within his own Peninsula.

The problem of emigration has not always been presented in the same form. During the whole of the nineteenth century public opinion, far from resenting the restrictions on emigration, complained of its extent. And if it now notes with disquiet how small are the numbers of free emigrants, it formerly protested against the assistance given to those who went out to work practically as slaves.



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INDIAN EMIGRATION

This map shows the approximate distribution of Indians throughout the World but not their exact location

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

In the last century Indian emigration was distinctly of a servile character. The lot of labourers who accepted service from recruiting agents in the form of an agreement binding for several years, to work with an unknown master, on a plantation which they could not choose for themselves, at a pay of which only the maximum amount was regulated, was scarcely different from that of negro slaves. The very date when the movement became important shows clearly its source; the first official reference to emigration is dated the very year of the abolition of slavery in the British Colonies (1834). It was at the beginning of the last century, when the recruiting of blacks became increasingly more difficult, the first Indian coolies were sent off to the sugar plantations of the Antilles and the Pacific Islands. The Indian manual labourer was intended to replace the negro; the planters expected the same advantages as before; they required him to do the same work and there was hardly any difference in their treatment of the two races. In the following years the various colonies in the Antilles, the Pacific and the Indian Oceans began to be populated in their turn with Indian labourers. In 1834 they first came to Mauritius, ten years later to Trinidad, Jamaica, and Guiana; to Santa Lucia and St. Vincent towards 1858, to Natal in 1860, besides the French Colonies, Réunion, Martinique, and Guadeloupe, which also attracted a certain number of Indians. Throughout the whole century a continuous stream of emigrants poured into the nearer countries of Ceylon and Malaya.

This exodus of workers under contract, the 'in-

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

dentured,' continued during the whole of last century and even as late as the Great War. The Government confined its intervention to a control that became yearly more rigorous. It appointed government agents as recruiting officials, who after 1864 had to receive special permits from the authorities. It took precautions to prevent emigrants from leaving the country except of their own free will, and had them examined on the boats by special agents. Finally, to prevent ill-treatment of Indians overseas, it claimed (in 1856) the right to suspend at pleasure, in the case of certain colonies, emigration of workers under contract, and in 1910, less specifically, to stop emigration in any form whatever. The objections raised by prominent natives to the Government of India, and by the latter to the Secretary of State in London, resulted in a control of ever-increasing severity. In spite of the appeals from sugar-cane planters in the Antilles, the British governors advised prudence. 'The illiterate classes among whom emigrants are recruited,' wrote one of them in 1877 to a Secretary of State in London, 'view emigration with the greatest mistrust. If we were to support it openly, we should certainly create deep prejudice against the reputation of Great Britain among this element of the population.'*

In spite of restrictions, indentured labour at the beginning of this century still bore the marks of its original evils. Those departing were still so ignorant as to their new masters, their work and the difficulties

* See *Indian Emigration*, by an Emigrant, p. 22; Rajani Kanta Das, *Hindustani Workers on the Pacific Coast* (1923).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

of their new life as to make the insistence upon their *willingness* to go (an admission difficult to obtain) entirely valueless. The impossibility of breaking a contract which bound him for a period of five or ten years, however great his disillusionment on his arrival, frequently drove the coolie to suicide. Payments were on a very low scale and the costs of living might go up without any corresponding changes in wages* fixed a long time previously. Recruiters were inevitably a class of professionals, adept in every art of profiting by the wretchedness and ignorance of the crowd, and like the slave-masters they tampered with regulations without actually infringing them. Finally the impossibility of arranging for the emigration of women under so exacting a system reduced these men to vice and decadence.

In the past thirty years violent protests against the system of indentured labour have been heard in all the National Congresses and Indian Legislative Councils. At that held in 1910 Gokhale, one of the most respected of Indian leaders, exclaimed that 'The system was unjust, monstrous, based on fraud, maintained by violence, a hideous blot on the civilization of any country which dared to tolerate it.' Pan-Indian meetings of protest assembled every year. At one of these, in 1917, held at Allahabad, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, one of the leaders of the Indian Nationalist Party, bewailed 'the disgrace, the ineffable, endless disgrace of the indentured system.' In her

* See MacNeill and Chunianial, *Report on the conditions of Indians in Trinidad, British Guiana, Jamaica and Fiji* (1914).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

passionate enthusiasm she denounced emigration in all its forms. 'Who, then, is responsible, save the inhabitants of India, for the exile of our countrymen, forced to seek afar their daily bread? Why is our patriotism not bold enough, strong enough, and sufficiently comprehensive to enable us to safeguard the ignorant, who leave our shores, from death, and not only from death but from dishonour?'

The necessities of the War, which induced the Government to make so many promises to India and even to fulfil some of them, obliged them to put down a system which seemed hateful in the eyes of the people. At the Legislative Council, in 1916, a motion, calling upon the Viceroy to take steps to abolish the system of emigration of workers under contract, was passed. In 1922 the Emigration Act declared all indentured emigration illegal, and in more general terms forbade any emigration of unskilled workers, except to such countries as the Council and the two legislative bodies had specified. Under the terms 'emigrant' the act included all persons leaving India with assisted passages. Assisted emigration was confined to Ceylon and Malaya, but in such cases the contract was valid only for a month, the recruiter must belong to the village of the men whom he recruited, strikes were not to be considered legal offences, and numerous facilities and guarantees were promised, so as to enable frequent returns to the country of origin. Since 1922 indentured emigration, in fact as well as in law, has entirely ceased.

* *Speeches of Sarojini Naidu*, p. 75.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

The abolition of a system which had provoked such deep indignation did not silence the attacks made upon it. For some past time other classes of emigrants had also been included. Labourers under contract were no longer the majority. In the stream had been swept along with them many Indians who departed under less restraint and with higher ambitions. These were, first of all, such peasants as had succeeded in collecting sufficient money or raising a loan before leaving from the country of their choice. They were mostly friends or relations of the workers under contract, many of whom had succeeded in establishing their own homes overseas when their contract was once terminated. They had managed to get away from the sugar cane plantation in Natal or the Antilles and develop some small patch of land of which they had secured a lease. Their great wish had been to see among them members of their own family or villages, and by loans or alluring descriptions of the land of their exile they had succeeded in attracting thither large numbers of their compatriots as farm hands on their own fields or with small farmers nearby. These little groups of Indian cultivators in the distant lands of Africa, America or Oceania, forming around the emigrants under contract, inevitably attracted in turn a particular type of newcomers — masses of those small traders who swarm in India and come thrusting in everywhere in the wake of the peasant, lending him money at high interest when the harvest is poor, securing a mortgage on his property, and so depriving him of his profits during the good years, or harrassing him with difficulties

ASIA'S 'TEEMING MILLIONS

which they themselves have brought about. As the small artisan, the pedlar, pawnbroker or frequently the middle-man between the peasant and wholesale dealer, offering to stock the farms if he owns sufficient capital, this individual in his turn plays many parts among the patient, unsuspecting natives. Throughout all India he is indispensable, but hated by all. His name varies with the provinces, but his conduct is always the same. Sometimes he is the Chetty, at others the Malabar. Or he is the Marwari, who from his desert province of Rajpoutana comes to the extreme south of the Deccan to offer his services to the peasants. In South Africa he is known by the general term of Arab. It was inevitable that he should have accompanied Indian communities overseas, and he was all the more eager for the voyage since there had long been an active trade between certain districts of India and some of the most recent settlements of workers under contract.

In the last thirty years the valley of the Indus, whence Moslem merchants set forth years ago to the ports of South Africa, has become the chief centre from which these emigrants departed. The Moslem regions of Sind or Gujarat, the towns of Karachi, Hyderabad or Surat have sent forth on every sea swarms of these small traders, nomad brokers and itinerant money-lenders. To men of their wandering habits such voyages have but few terrors; they had not the Hindu's scruples of travel by sea, while their very low standards of living encouraged them to set out on the path of adventure, confident of their ability

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

to compete by the cheapness of their goods with traders accustomed to larger profits.

Bolder and more ambitious, these newcomers have gradually turned to countries other than those where the indentured had settled. From Natal, for instance, they have crossed the frontiers of Cape Colony and the Transvaal. Many went in entirely different directions; all the emigrants to Australia or Canada during the last two centuries have gone voluntarily and at their own expense. And in almost all the islands of the Indian or Pacific Oceans, even in the French colonies of Madagascar, Réunion and Indo-China, are to be found these itinerant Chettys. They often came on chance, but they have amassed very considerable fortunes, and acquired large trading interests. Under these circumstances, Indian emigrants became important, not only in view of their numbers (in 1921 the overseas population exceeded 2,150,000) but also by their abilities and their influence in the economic world.

Now it was precisely this new spirit among the emigrants which the countries admitting them resented the most. They asked for workers and received competitors. A rivalry of interests, intensified by racial hostilities, was bound to develop. The more widely the desire to emigrate spread among the Indians, the more numerous became the obstacles set up to check them. The Governments of South Africa and, above all, of Natal, where the influx of Indians had become, by 1900, the most considerable, were naturally the first to take measures to check it. They began by

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

endeavouring to dissuade Indians from settling in their country by lowering the economic and legal status of those who had come to reside there. In 1885 a Government Commission of Natal shows this intention unmistakably by reporting that 'Popular feeling requires the Indian to remain indentured during the whole of his stay in the colony.' Special annual taxes, fixed at £3 in Natal since 1895, were imposed upon Indians. They were deprived of political rights in that colony and in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal even of the municipal franchise. But the main object was to check their trading activity, to confine merchants' custom to Indians alone, to dump them down in quarters of the town specially allotted to them, and to prevent agriculturists from obtaining ownership or even the right to rent lands. Some recent enactments of 1923 and 1924 have almost succeeded in attaining these purposes. In each county of Natal a commission has been appointed to determine the granting of licences to trade and hold property, and these licences may be withheld at will. Such restrictions and a sense of insecurity both for the present and the future would alone suffice to make the settlement of Indians in these colonies of South Africa impossible.

Many states have not only discouraged immigration by treating resident Indians badly, but they have often absolutely prohibited any newcomer from entering the country. As long as the indentured formed the majority of the emigrants the movement was checked by the Indian Government. But as voluntary emigration became the more common type it was the

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

states admitting them which were anxious to prevent it. The Orange Free State prohibits any Indian practising a regular trade to cross its frontier. In Natal the Minister of the Interior may refuse admittance to any immigrant under the vague pretext of economic danger or of habits not in accordance with those of the country. Since 1913 Cape Town only admits those who can read and write, a policy equivalent to a total prohibition.

In most of the countries to which they emigrate the question has been decided equally unfavourably to the Indians. With the exception of Ceylon, British Malaya, Mauritius, and Kenya, immigration was forbidden even before the War in all the countries to which the Indian had begun to travel freely. In Australia, where many Punjabis have immigrated ever since the days of the Gold Rush, a language test fixed arbitrarily renders it absolutely impossible for Easterners to enter the country. In Canada, the provision insisting on a sum of \$250 on entry and the cost of the voyage there from his native land bars the door to the Indian. Even in Kenya, just quoted as more lenient and where Indian traders, Sikhs by whose assistance the country had been conquered, and former immigrants from South Africa had settled, an ordinance of 1915 practically prevents the Indian from settling in the good districts, by forbidding the transfer of lands belonging to the European community to Indians without the consent of Government.

Imperial sanction has even been given to all these restrictions. In the course of the Imperial Conferences,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

in 1917 and 1918, resolutions were carried and duly accepted by the Dominions; all the governments of the British Empire, including India, were given the right of exercising complete control over their populations by restricting immigration. Thenceforth all the Governments professed to be obeying the sovereign will of the other Dominions, and thereby put it out of their own power to protest against restrictions in other countries.

Since this resolution Indian emigration to any of the Dominions seems to be checked and that for a long time to come. Indeed, with the exception of Ceylon and Malaya, to which reference will be made later, and of Mauritius and Fiji, where emigration schemes are under consideration, all the British countries are closed to the newcomer from India. The number of Indians living overseas, if we except those in Ceylon and Malaya, is declining rapidly; more than 7,000 Indians left South Africa between 1922 and 1926. The Dominions refuse to accept coloured immigrants, the Indian Government has prohibited the emigration of the coolie class working under contract, while the governments of all the Dominions and most of the British Colonies have practically prohibited the entry of free emigrants.

Protests against restrictions framed to check free emigration have taken the place of the indignant outcries once so noticeable over coolie emigration. These restrictions, following the harsh treatment of Asiatics overseas, have provoked very violent campaigns in

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the Press and in public opinion. Though expressed no less explicitly in other Asiatic countries such as China and Japan, these assume a character of their own, since India is a British colony.

In the first place, the Indians protest against them in the name of their status in the Empire. As members of the British Empire they wish, they say, to be treated on a footing of equality with the other states of the Commonwealth. 'We have to endure all the disadvantages of being part of the Empire, whether we like it or not; so at least we should enjoy the advantage.' Such is the argument reiterated, though variously expressed, in one meeting after another. 'You cannot, owing to colour, banish from your countries the subjects of His Majesty the King-Emperor,' exclaimed the Indian delegate, Sir T. Saprú, at the Imperial Conference in 1923. A Bombay journalist, by no means an extremist, rightly interprets the views of moderate men, when he writes, 'The field of battle for the rights of India will be fought in South Africa.'* The struggle for free emigration and the right to vote overseas is regarded as the struggle for Imperial equality, an ideal which has been more clearly understood since the admission of representatives from India to the Imperial Conferences and the League of Nations. Indian delegates seize every opportunity to demand this equality. At the time of the Imperial Declaration in 1918, while leaving the Dominions free to close their doors to certain immigrants, the Indians insisted upon a reciprocal clause, allowing them to inflict

* *Bombay Journal*, January 16th, 1926.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the same treatment on the Dominions that refused to favour them. With legislation thus modified, Indian self-esteem might be willing to comply strictly with the policy of the Dominions. Indians indeed do not dare to protest against the enforcement in any particular country of a right which they claim for themselves, but they cannot tolerate restrictions injurious to immigrants in the Imperial Colonies. Although there are far fewer Indians there than in South Africa, the question of Kenya has raised more protests than that of Natal; the Indians may rail against the British Government ruling in Kenya, but they cannot deny a Dominion the right of national sovereignty. The idea of Imperial equality is evident in these protests.

But this bitterness has perhaps another consequence; it helps to further the thought of Indian unity, an India which would be not only Asiatic, but would include the Indians in distant lands. Meetings of protest against restrictions and the hardships inflicted on Indians overseas are almost the only occasions when corporative, religious, political, and intellectual societies, usually at variance among themselves, are to be found united. If we take any chance list of the associations which arranged the meeting in Bombay in 1926 to protest against the anti-Asiatic legislation of South Africa, we find representatives of all political and municipal trends of thought, delegates from the great trading corporations in Bombay, and the best brains of the three great religions, Hindu, Moslem, and Parsee. Every speaker harped on the same grievance. Many societies were formed to create a

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

common viewpoint between the Indians of the Mother Country, and those dispersed overseas. The chief of these, the 'Imperial Indian Citizenship Association,' in name alone comprehends the whole programme. One of the first results of the movement, then is to unite all Indians more strongly together. 'We have, our domestic quarrels,' said Sir T. Saprú, the Delegate at the Imperial Conference in 1923; 'we have moderates and extremists. We have non-co-operators. We have Hindus and Mohamedans. But in all that concerns the status of our fellow-citizens overseas, let me tell you . . . that we stand absolutely united.' A politician's eloquence must not, of course, be taken too seriously, nor must it be forgotten that only a very small section of the population rises to the bait of these general statements. Yet when repeated by politicians, merchants and university professors in India, they have their importance. Inter-racial hostility has stirred up sympathy for the fate of Indians overseas and there blossoms forth a vague ideal of Indian nationality.

Finally, the protests are made not only in the name of the Indian nation, but more generally, in that of all peoples of colour. From India are heard the voices that echo in China and Japan, claiming equal rights of emigration. A solidarity of the coloured races is aroused, far more intense than mere nationalist feeling. 'Our present grievance in South Africa is the prelude to a life and death struggle between the Whites and the Blacks,' said Sir Abdul Rháman, the leader of the Mussulman Party in India, on his return from

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Africa, to the correspondent of the *Indian Daily Mail* of Bombay.* At a meeting in Bombay the Secretary of the Union of Emigrated Indians, one of the most influential Indians in the city and usually a man of moderate views, said: 'These outrages are the beginning of a great war, a war which will be more terrible even than that of 1914, a war between the white race and the coloured nations of the world.'†

* *Indian Daily Mail*, January 21st, 1926.

† *Indian Abroad*, No. 14, p. 15.

CHAPTER VIII

INDIA'S NEED OF EMIGRATION

Emigration an economic necessity for India—Case of Madras Presidency—Irregularity of harvests—Decline of local industries—Western influences—The land system—The Mirasdars—Debts and peasants' enslavement—Emigration under present conditions—Dislike of emigration prevalent among all castes—Conditions overseas—Efforts to secure home surroundings—The Khangani—Emigrants' outlook unchanged—Their helplessness.

INDIAN opinion is most closely concerned with the political aspect of emigration and on this its denunciations are most violent. The outcry in the Press is raised on the grounds of right—right to Imperial, national and racial equality. The other side of the problem, its economic necessity for India, is treated as almost entirely negligible. This silence is perhaps prudent and deliberate, for Indian politicians do not wish it to be supposed overseas that the Peninsula is not self-supporting and, above all, that Indian emigrants are merely exiles seeking their daily bread. They claim freedom to emigrate as a right, and do not wish to appear to be begging for it as a favour. They prefer to emphasise the aid which Indians overseas contribute in work or capital rather than the means of subsistence which they come to seek. The mass of emigrants from India, where more than 85 per cent

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

of the inhabitants are illiterate, exhibit a marked indifference to these discussions of their rights; they are practically unrepresented in the minority which shapes 'public opinion.' They struggle to find a livelihood wherever it may be found. Must they go to look for it overseas? Must the Indian peoples be forced to emigrate as a vital economic necessity?

In dealing with this question, one district in particular, the Presidency of Madras, affords an interesting example, as it has always been the chief starting-point for overseas emigration. Other districts, such as Bengal or the Central Provinces, have also been centres, but to a far less extent. The actual number of petty Moslem traders, who set forth from Sind or Gujurat and whom African legislation has now completed barred, was less important than their relatively high standard and the apprehensions to which they gave rise overseas. Moreover, having started out with a small capital but enough to set up a successful stall in the outskirts of some African town, their motive in emigrating was to make more money rather than a bare subsistence. The typical emigrants are the Tamils from the Coromandel coasts, who when slavery was abolished replaced the African slaves on the Antilles plantations. And now again the Tamil is almost the sole emigrant to Malaya and Ceylon, the only lands still open to the Indians, and more than 90 per cent of them come from the Madras Presidency. In spite of control and legal restriction, if we compare the totals of emigrants and immigrants between 1911 and 1921, we find that the Province lost more than

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

one and a half millions of its workers. For the last five years about 90,000 coolies have gone annually to Ceylon with assisted passages, while to Malaya the total is 75,000. The reports of emigration officials in Malaya or Ceylon note that these numbers would be much higher if the demand for manual labour overseas was equal to the supply. However plentiful the annual rubber harvests in Malaya or the tea crops in Ceylon the gangsters always bring from India an ample supply of coolies. There are always enough men willing to go every year as soon as the way, which admits an insignificant number of them, is opened.

Nature plays an important part in the movement. The uncertainty of the seasons has always been the main cause of unemployment and emigration and in no part of Hindustan is the irregularity of the rains more marked than on this coast of Coromandel. The south-west monsoon, which brings here and also over the other regions of India the early summer rainfalls, is followed by a second monsoon from the north-east. The period of heavy rainfall, the most important in the year, is from October to December. The two rice harvests, one usually towards September, the other at the beginning of winter, correspond to these two monsoons. Even in prosperous years, in a country where the peasant lives solely on the produce of his fields, the warm dry months just before the sowing, from March to June, invariably bring unemployment and then the emigration officials of Ceylon or Malaya receive the greatest number of applicants. Very often this unem-

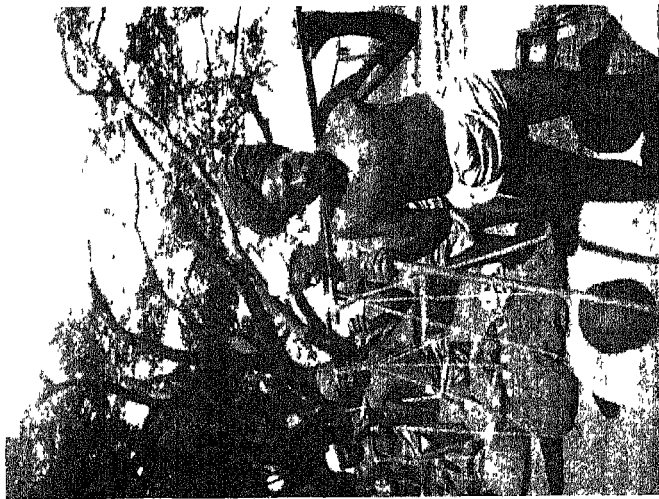


Photo E. Demery
TAMIL PORTERS IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY

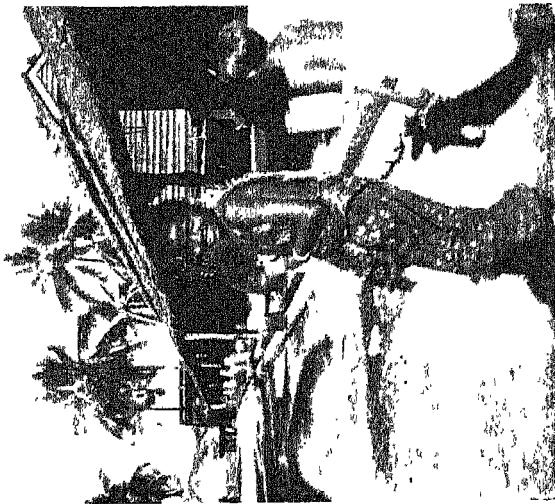


Photo F. Deunay
INDIAN SETTLEMENT ON THE COCOA TREE PLANTATIONS

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

ployment is intensified. The heavy rainfalls of November and December are much less regular throughout India than the summer rains. In autumn the Coromandel peasant often vainly awaits the downpours on which his second harvest depends. When this is ruined by excessive droughts, the Tamil peasant, with no means of making provision for his ill-fortune, is forced to leave the country in search of his daily bread. Sometimes he must set out at once, sometimes he can wait a few months longer and borrow money on the chance of better luck next year. In the past, after the failure of several harvests, terrible famines such as in 1866, 1878 and 1899, caused hecatombs of dead. To-day owing to the development of means of communication and the foresight and energy of the British such catastrophes rarely occur. But a regular season of unemployment, with continual under-feeding, has taken the place of this disastrous periodic scourge. Panics that baffle description, men and beasts rushing madly across the whole country, as recounted by eye-witnesses of only twenty years ago, are now of the past. Seasonal migrations from the driest lands to those better irrigated are more numerous, however. As the writer traversed the country districts in South Madras, this movement could be observed at the end of November, as the season already promised to be dry; in the district of Tanjore, for instance, and on the Cavery, both up and down stream. British officials have reported, for the past few years, a seasonal influx in the bad periods from inland districts, as a rule, towards the mouths of all the rivers along the Coro-

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

mandel coast. Sometimes the workers leave the plain or plateau and make their way up to the tea or coffee plantations in the Nilgiri hills or Mysore. Sometimes they even get as far as the Assam plantations* or the Burma ricefields. A new form of nomadism has begun. At the first offer of an opening in Ceylon or Malaya this seasonal movement becomes a permanent exodus, and local emigration extends to overseas.

Natural conditions cannot entirely explain the necessity for this emigration, which is rather due to certain human agencies. Vices of economic or social systems, in addition to the uncertainty of the climate, make it increasingly urgent for the peasants to leave their homes.

Some of the causes due to human agency are recent and for these public opinion in India blames the English. Western influence is prevalent and its effect has spread even to the countryside; also the introduction of machinery has caused the decline of the small peasant industries, on which in former days the farmer could rely to support himself during the three or four months of yearly unemployment. To-day, however, the small spinning wheels are no longer to be seen in the cottages; at most one or two specially trained artisans spin and weave in each village. Most of the garments worn come from the Bombay or even English factories. In olden days, the Indians claim,

* See *Labour and its Movement* (Madras, July 13th, 1926), by Sir George Paddison. In 1925, 13,684 Madrasis went to Assam and about 12,000 go annually to Burma.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

each house had its wheel; families worked together in the fields, but their produce has gone with the rest. In the district of Tanjore, for instance, there are loud complaints over the great number of factories established there – now nearly 250 – whereby women of the poorer classes were deprived in a very few years of the chief source of their livelihood, the husking of rice. As to work in the fields, now that the crops required for industry, such as cotton or nuts, are beginning to be grown instead of the time-honoured tillings, the demand for manual labour is appreciably less. The effect of this change, however, must not be exaggerated, although the ruin of subsidiary industries has certainly been far-reaching. It is unfortunate that we have no statistics or exact information to enable us to ascertain the reasonableness of a state of affairs, about which the Indians are so loud in their protests. One fact alone is certain: the suppression of an additional source of revenue further diminishes the already feeble resistance of the Tamil family during the critical months of the year, as it exposes the peasant even more fully to the trials of the climate and hastens his flight to other lands.

Indians maintain that the wide-spread unemployment and necessity to emigrate are due to western influence and the decline of the small industries. The British, on the other hand, perceive that it arose from the persistence in antiquated methods in rural districts which they cannot reform fast enough, and of these the system of land tenure is especially harmful.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Of all the districts in India the parcelling out of land is most extensive in the Madras Presidency. The village usually contains a great number of small holders, either owners or tenants, who cultivate their land themselves or with the assistance of their families and occasionally hired labour. Their cultivation is, in fact, a one-man affair; each man pays his own taxes to the village headman, who acts as intermediary. This system of individual ownership and cultivation of a tiny plot seems typical of the Dravidian people and hardly extends beyond their frontier.* The small owner tills such a minute strip of land that the paddy gathered in his ricefield is often not sufficient even to support his own family. One of the members of the group, usually the son, but sometimes the father, frequently goes out to work for a neighbour and the money which he thus earns will supply the needs of his own kinsfolk and make his own strip of land pay. In this case unforeseen losses of employment are the more serious, since he reckons on his wages as farm-hand to pay back the loans which he has had to borrow to farm his own field. Unless he can find work with a neighbour, he will not have enough put by to cultivate his own farm in the following year. Such small-scale cultivation, though it increases the number of farmers, means fewer chances of work and the evils of one year's unemployment react upon the next.

Side by side with the small owners and farmers

* See Baden-Powell, *Land Revenue and Tenure in British India* (1912), p. 90.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

who go out as hired men as opportunity occurs, is a class of farm labourers who live in great poverty. According to the census of 1921 they represent in the Madras Presidency about 30 per cent of the total rural population. Their presence on a land usually tilled by families working together is mainly due to caste prejudices, which bar the lowest classes of society from owning land. One class of them, the farm hands, though their position of dependence has its disadvantages, are often fortunate enough to be kept in their master's outhouses in times of stress. The rest, the journeyman workers, are not so lucky; they earn only a trifling wage* and are the first to be sent away in times of drought. Finding in the bad seasons that his work has already been taken by the small farmer, having nothing saved to tide him over the most trying months and with no other trade to turn to, the journeyman is the first to go overseas. The farm hand follows him, a little later the farmer, and finally the small owner himself.

In certain districts, in addition to the evils inherent in small workings, we find also those associated with large estates. Every British official reports that the position of farm labourers is at its worst in the four districts of the Mirasdars, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, South Arcot and Chingleput, and it is from these districts that the number of emigrants is the largest. The Commissioner of Works in the Madras Presidency, Sir George Paddison, states this to be the case in a letter to the Government Secretary and his

* From 4-7 annas daily.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

point is confirmed by the statistics of the emigrants' place of departure. In 1925 out of the twenty-five districts of the Province, the four districts of the Mirasdars supply the greatest number of emigrants.

In this part of India certain personages of high caste, the Mirasdars, claim to have special privileges over all village lands, both those still unoccupied as well as those which they cultivate or where they reside. They base their claims on agreements made in the past: in Tanjore and South Arcot, owing to the dismemberment of the old kingdom of Tangore, where the dignitaries have retained only their territorial influence; at Chingleput and Trichinopoly, where they still possess certain definite rights on the cultivated soil, because it was intensively colonized by the members of their caste.* Formerly the Mirasdars shared, each in turn, the profits from various fields in the village, though to-day they rarely enforce this claim. Their moral influence in the village is almost incontestable. Only a traveller through these Indian hamlets can realize the terror which these local powers inspire or the respectful gesture with which the peasant points out their abode, the most pretentious in the village. There is no gainsaying the will of the Mirasdar. A small holder cannot buy more land, if he refuses his permission. He takes into his own service the artisans in the village and, if so disposed, takes possession of public works, such as a reservoir or roadway. In a village in the Tanjore district we were told of a

* See Baden-Powell, *Land Revenue and Tenure*, p. 100.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Mirasdar who had built his house on the main roadway and, although all communications were thus cut off in the village, no one dared to protest against the great man. In these districts caste prejudices are still stronger than anywhere else, for British laws are powerless to deal with these time-honoured traditions. In many districts where the Government had decided to allot to the farm labourers certain lands on which to build their houses, the officials have noted that the candidates have withdrawn their requests owing to pressure from the Mirasdars.* But, above all, they terrify the peasants by holding over their heads the fear of ejection. They combine together and threaten him into accepting such work and pay as suit them. Actual ejections are perhaps not very frequent, but their threatening attitude makes the workers' position very insecure. The labourer is completely dependent upon them, for the Mirasdar can exercise his right of seizure in the whole district. If he has the means to do so, the peasant will flee from this oppression.

Owing to the climate, the recent decline of peasant industries, the land system with its petty subdivisions and the exactions of the Mirasdars, uncertainty of obtaining work has become the predominant evil throughout the Province and the cause of emigration. The unfortunate peasant does not as a rule set off at the first bout of unemployment or threat from the great landowner. He borrows, in the hope of improving his position; so debt is usually the transitory stage

* Administration Report of the Labour Department (1925-1926).

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

between unemployment and emigration. This prolonging of the time of waiting merely aggravates the ills of unemployment and makes emigration still more a necessity.

It is difficult to realize the serious nature of this problem of debt in the Tamil rural districts, where the peasants are continually complaining of their creditors. Debt is all the more formidable since the creditor is usually the chief land-owner or leading man in the village. Accumulating year after year a loan can rarely be repaid in full; so debt binds the labourer to his employer and the farmer to his landlord for life. Unable to repay in money, the debtor pays in work; the day labourer gradually becomes the farm servant, whom his master feeds, but no longer allows a wage; the farmer becomes the labourer, to whom the Mirasdar leaves for payment a pittance of his harvest, just enough to keep him alive.

Bound over to his master under this system, the peasant cannot leave the field, although the cultivation no longer brings him any return whatever. If the farm is sold, the debtor-farmer merely sees his debt transferred to the new owner; he is in fact sold along with the land. In his report on the Tanjore district, Commissioner Grey states that in the ninety-eight villages where he conducted his enquiries, he found ten where the Mirasdars claimed that all the farm labourers were bound to them for life. In some of them, the same official states, that the Mirasdars refused to accept repayment of the debts, so as not to lose their hold over the peasants. These bonds are not only

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

valid in the case of the debtor; sons inherit their fathers' debt, and most of the peasants live in a state of actual slavery. In the British Civil Courts bodily constraint, of course, is not recognised, but in practice very few suits reach the Civil Courts. The Indian peasant is too ignorant to go to law; he is tied down by so many caste prejudices that the idea of bringing an action against the chief man would seem almost iniquitous. If he had the courage to go to law against the Mirasdar, even if legally justified, he would immediately be banned by the whole community, and would not find any work in his village. As a rule he is forced to agree to an oral contract of slavery. Sometimes he even agrees to sign an acknowledgement of debt, which ties him down for the rest of his life and after his death is equally binding on all his children. His slavery is complete. In its wake comes poverty, now unrelieved, for the great landowner leaves him scarcely enough to keep him alive, even in the good seasons. Unable to find work in the neighbourhood where everyone knows of his contract, his only means of avoiding the consequences of his debts is to flee beyond the limits of the Mirasdar's influence; so he goes off to start a new life in a new land.

Limited to a voyage to the neighbouring countries of Malaya and Ceylon, emigration is more like a flight than an adventure. It is not the outcome of a plan deliberately matured, but rather a last resource. On the tea or rubber plantations overseas the Tamil peasant finds a refuge, temporarily or permanently,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

from hunger and unemployment, far from slavery under the Mirasdar.

The circumstances that drive the Indian peasant into exile must indeed be very urgent, since he is most unwilling to leave his native land. He waits till he is reduced almost to his last anna before he decides to embark. He is by nature conservative. Except the Mussulman trader or itinerant money-lender who is a nomad by instinct, whose connections overseas are of long standing and who, precisely because of these ties, is mistrusted in the Hindoo villages, the Indian dreads to leave his country – indeed, he is ashamed to do so. Politicians and intellectuals may speak before gatherings of traders or students in the large towns of greater India and of Indian enterprise in the world outside. Among the peasants, of whom almost all the emigrants consist, exile brings with it an overpowering sense of degradation.

Among those who belong to a respectable caste the cause of this repulsion is obvious enough. The Indian of birth and position can always leave his own village for distant lands, but he finds many difficulties on his return. When I was staying in Calcutta I saw some hundreds of Indians of the middle castes who had not been afraid to go out to the sugar plantations in British Guiana and who, disappointed and unsuccessful, had decided to return to their native lands north of the Madras Presidency. No one in their village would receive them. The landlords and headsmen had put them under a ban. The workers in the community refused to work for them; no father would

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

agree to grant them a child in marriage. Helpless to contend against the prejudices of the village, despite their unlucky experiences they were thinking of leaving again for Guiana. In his fear of being met with a unanimous hostility on his return, the Indian of caste in the countryside will not venture to go and be defiled overseas.*

Members of the lower castes also seem to feel the same scruple at leaving their native land. In 1925, out of the labourers intended for the Ceylon plantations, 46 per cent were members of the lowest classes.† Even these poor wretches, although accustomed to contempt in their native country, considered emigration as something decadent. All those emigrants who had returned to their villages, with whom we had occasion to speak during our visit, strove to find excuses for going away, as if it had been an actual sin. Most of them tried to prove that they were not responsible for their exodus. One asserted that the gangster had made him tipsy, so as to carry him off against his will. Another assured us that he had been beaten and gagged, while a third, in order to cast the blame of his decision on someone else, said it was a Brahmin who had preached emigration. The gangsters were usually described in the most heinous terms, and the villagers often boasted that they had met them with beatings. The violence and lies of these agents were, according

* Caste prejudice, however, is less strong in the towns. But we found two instances of Indian students returned from Europe being forced to live apart from former friends, as they had refused to submit to a complicated ceremony of purification.

† Adiravida, Sakbrilaya, Kalla, and Valluda.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

to them, the cause of the emigrating. Only one of all those who spoke to us admitted that destitution was the real reason for his departure.

Moreover, while these emigrants are ashamed to leave their homes, they are no less deterred from doing so by fear. Even when he migrates to Ceylon, so near-by that such a term seems unsuitable, the Tamil departs with as much apprehension as for a voyage to Malaya. In the emigration camps marked out on the Coramandel coast at Negapatam or Mandapam, one may attend almost every evening the ceremony which precedes departure. Towards nightfall the crowd gathers round a little roughly hewn statue of clay set up in honour of the occasion. To the beat of the tom-tom, each Tamil approaches and lays before the idol his offering of butter, banana or coconut. Quite late in the night the soft strains of music can still be heard, until the camp surveyors finally drive away the group. According to these officials, the goddess besought is the deity who drives away contagious illness, especially cholera and death. The divinity invoked by the faithful before his departure would naturally be the one to ward off the most dangerous evils. Whatever be the reason, even a brief exile has its regular rites with which no emigrant dispenses. When he has to leave his native Deccan, the Tamil invokes the protection of the gods.

The vastly different conditions in which the peasant will live overseas, though the comparison may be distinctly favourable to the latter, are not such as to

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

allay his dread of change. In the first place, the landscape is entirely altered. Few rural districts are in such marked contrast as the Deccan countryside and the Ceylon or Malayan plantations. In the Coromandel plain the Tamil works among ricefields, which stretch out as far as he can see, square upon square, monotonously over the irrigated lands. In Ceylon or Malaya, on the contrary, the luxuriant vegetation of the Equator is all around him, or he may live under the bushy shade of the coco tree near the hillside farther inland, ascending slightly, he reaches the light and shade of the rubber plantations, or still higher up he may settle on the broken uplands covered with tea-plants.

His house is no less different to his old homestead. The two have only one quality in common on both sides of the seas, in that they are built close together, but in every other detail they are radically different. Compared to the Indian hovels of clay or thatch, covered with dust or mud according to the season, the Cingalese with its fenced-in enclosure and, above all, the Malayan wooden house on piles, primitive though both may be, seem cleaner and healthier. In the Straits Settlements, where comparatively strict housing regulations are enforced, the encampments consist of hutments raised in rows at right angles to one another. Each habitation, which consists of only one room with bare floor and walls, is reached by a little ladder. Below, in front of the house, stretches a little stone wall, behind which the Indian cooks his meals. In the daytime during his hours of ease he rests beneath the

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

shade of his wooden floor. All recently-erected houses have to conform to a uniform type laid down by the Commissioner of Works. Nowhere in his native country has the Tamil seen wooden hutments built to rule and aligned geometrically.*

Lastly, conditions of work are quite different to what he has been used to at home. Instead of the old-fashioned methods of tilling his ricefield, the coolie has to accustom himself to the system and discipline of the plantations. In the rubber plantation, too, he must get used to methods of raising crops required for industries and which ensure good returns, acquire a steady but not heavy hand in making incisions, so as not to weaken the trees, know on how many days it is possible to tap, and even learn details of rubber production in the tiny factory at the corner of the plantation, where the coolies curdle the sap and turn it into crêpe rubber.

The new system of cultivation brings with it a greater security of employment. On the Malayan or Cingalese plantation the coolie is rarely out of work, for rubber, tea plants or coco trees must be tended continuously throughout the year. In a country where emigrants form almost the entire source of manual labour, it is not to the planters' interest to allow his men to leave, since he would be obliged, in order to replace them, either to contribute to the cost of trans-

* In Ceylon, the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States the Governments have greatly improved housing conditions for emigrants, 80,000 hutments having been built between 1922 and 1925.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

porting other Indians or to induce the gangs of a neighbouring plantation to work for him by offering very high wages. Thus the coolie is sure of regular employment.

In addition, he earns far more money overseas than in his own country, according to the emigration officials in Ceylon and the Malay States, whose statements are confirmed by the Commissioner of Works in the Madras Presidency.* A farm hand's average pay (reckoning the money value of his wages paid in food) would be five to six annas daily. In Ceylon they would amount to just over seven and in Malay from eight to ten annas.† The cost of living is perhaps higher in the Straits Settlements than in the Deccan, but not in Ceylon. The Tamil overseas can sometimes save enough from his pay to send money home to his relatives.‡ The uncertainty of the morrow does not exist on the plantation.

The Indian peasant overseas has thus greatly improved his lot, but the sudden change of surroundings might easily offend his conservative tastes. To induce the coolies to remain in Ceylon or Malaya, the British have endeavoured to consider their feelings and create in lands of exile an Indian atmosphere. They have organised a system of emigration by groups, so as not to break up social relationships, but attract

* Letter from Sir George Paddison to The Secretary of State, p. 5.

† Government of Madras Emigration and Immigration Report (1926), pp. 2 and 4.

‡ In 1926 the Postmaster General of Ceylon reckons the amount thus sent at nearly 2,800,000 rupees.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

overseas members of the same family or inhabitants of the same village rather than isolated individuals. On the Cingalese tea or Malayan rubber plantations peasants from the same districts usually meet again. This group system is based upon a careful choice of the gangsters and in requiring them to comply with certain conditions. Without actually compelling the Khangani, who to-day are the recruiting officers, to send overseas only members of their own families, the British have laid down various regulations, by which they act as heads of families or at any rate as district agents. The Khangani is only authorised to recruit manual labour in the village in which he was born. He himself must have worked on a plantation in the colony to which he is taking the new workers. The Government licences, which he is obliged to have for each voyage, only allow him to take overseas quite a small number of coolies, twenty at most in the case of Ceylon. He is therefore not forced to go very far afield to find them, as his own kinsfolk, friends and neighbours are generally open to his persuasion and the gang is soon completed. Thus the emigrants are nearly all friends of the gangster. The group is practically complete long before they start and, arrived overseas, they reassemble without any perceptible change.

But what they gain in unity, the exiles lose in independence. Among these passive, unresisting coolies, the Khangani assumes the authority of a chieftain. However poverty-stricken he may be, he gradually succeeds in wielding over the men, whom he

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

has recruited, a tyranny as harsh as that of the village chieftain or the Mirasdar from whom they have fled. In the first place, the Khangani is usually conscious of his own social superiority, for he is generally chosen from a caste rather higher than that of the labourers whom he is to bring back. Among half-naked Tamils, squatting at random before the long brick enclosures of the barricades in the emigration field, the Khangani may be easily recognised by his attitude. Seated apart with one or two intimates, his behaviour shows a studied independence. Very often he is the only one who has assumed the shirt and coat of the European; though a peasant by birth, he gradually acquires the commanding pretentiousness of the small Indian employer. He speaks in a tone of superiority, and often haughtily, of his recruits, and more than once we saw a Khangani offended because the coolies did not obey his orders. On the plantation in a group of emigrants he attains the position of umpire and judge. Like the chief man in the Deccan village, he settles the domestic troubles of the members of his group in the distant encampment, as well as their private disputes, their debts to each other and often even their religious privileges. In money matters he acts as the middleman between the manager and his coolies. He is responsible, conjointly with his men, for their debts to the planter. But above all, like the village head-man he gradually succeeds in exploiting those who have followed him financially, and enslaving them by debts. As soon as they have started, the Khangani profits by the ignorance and helplessness of his recruits and

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

usually keeps back for himself the outfit allowance granted by the planters. The resolution voted by the Cingalese planters in 1925, insisting upon his returning at least a quarter of the allowance to the coolie, was obviously intended to stop this practice. On the Cingalese or Malayan plantation, the Khangani discusses with the planter the question of the men's pay. But he is much more concerned with his own daily commission on the work of the coolies than with their actual payment. Finally the Khangani overseas becomes the money-lender in the same way as the great land-owner before the gang departed. He is only too eager to obtain an effective control over his recruits and he often borrows from the planter or his subordinate to enable him to lend to the members of his gang. If they remain for long on the plantations, the coolies are soon completely under his control.

Both in Malaya and Ceylon the British have frequently taken measures to rescue the emigrant from the Khangani's clutches. Unlike the indentured labour of former days, the emigrants are not now obliged to remain for more than a month on the plantations to which they have been despatched. They do not have to refund to the Khangani the cost of transport, which is defrayed in Malaya by the colonial government and the planters, and in Ceylon by the planters alone. They are not liable to imprisonment for shortcomings in work. Since the passing of the Emigration Act in 1922 they are freed from any debts contracted before their departure. Yet the coolie overseas, if he remains for long on the plantation, for most of his time there

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

is still in bondage to his gang, whose chief usually endeavours to exploit him.

If he leaves his plantation, he will usually go together with the whole gang, whose shifting the Khangani will have decided. Only when repatriated is he treated as an individual. In servitude before his departure, into servitude the Indian relapses after a lengthy or short period overseas. Again, he is in a group that is strictly confined and under the rule of a chief who is exploiting him. He still remains the cipher lost in the group. Material conditions have changed, but his own position overseas is scarcely different to what it was in his own home.

Except for work, the emigrant's life has remained entirely unchanged. There are almost as many women as men on the ricefields, while their numbers on the plantation are unusually large for a country of emigrants. Religious life continues, though far from the famous shrines and the centres of pilgrimage in the Deccan, with no more change than in the family. Each large plantation has its little temple, usually erected by the Tamils' own hands; the same music is heard there, the same ceremonies performed, though in simpler fashion, as in their native lands. Clothes have not changed, nor has the food, often imported to follow after the coolies. At the entrance to the plantation encampments, in the Straits Settlements, are usually two or three shops kept by Indians, where such articles of food and clothing as the coolies require are on sale. There, too, between four wooden planks

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

are displayed all the luxuries and dainties to which he could treat himself in his own country; betel-nut wrapped in leaves which are smeared over with white, grey or green powders and which the Indian dearly loves to chew, giving his teeth the colour of blood, cheap tobacco and even alcoholic drinks, toddies and arracks, on which much of his wages was spent in the village of former days. There are also goods for rare occasions, red stuffs for the women and, above all, ornaments, the heavy silver bracelets with which wrists and ankles are laden, the gilt badges which the Tamil women stick in their nostrils, the ear-rings or bead necklaces which even the men put round their necks on feastdays. Pent within these tiny stores is all that is necessary, or superfluous, for the men on the plantation, exactly as they had them in India.

In the distant plantations the Tamil peasants live under foreign influences; there is no intercourse between them and the Cingalese or Malayans, such as a prolonged sojourn in a country usually makes inevitable. Mixed marriages are very uncommon and work by the two races together quite the exception. Mutual influence in the religious or moral spheres is non-existent. The Tamils have kept their Indian customs unimpaired. They have left one slavery to relapse into another. They have changed country and work, but not their habits. They have not been uprooted, but simply transported to another land. They leave it and sometimes after many years go home again, yearning for their own India, longing once more to see the village from which only necessity drove

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

them. They will never leave the plantation except to return to their ricefield. They have crossed the Oceans, and yet have seen nothing beyond the lands which they have tilled without ambition or hope of rising above their despised caste. Their emigration is a transplanting; they have learnt nothing new. In this respect the Indian is radically different to the Chinese emigrant who goes to foreign lands to gain wealth and rise speedily to the position of merchant or planter. The Indian goes there merely to live.

So the stream of exiles pours overseas, by now confined to the narrow gateways of Ceylon or Malaya, helpless, unresisting and little different in outlook to the indentured labour of former days. Emigration rules and regulations are being brought to perfection, the emigrant's condition has improved materially, but the coolie's aspirations are no wider, his outlook on life not more extensive. His state is no longer that of a slave, but his mind remains servile.

Now these destitute coolies form the class of Indians from which come the greatest number of applicants for emigration. Most of them are forced to emigrate. Faced with failing harvests, the ruin of their little trades, the unendurable tyranny under the head man, or with all these misfortunes combined, many peasants from Southern India have no alternative between flight or death. For refusing admittance in their case most of the countries to which emigrants may resort, except Ceylon and Malaya, give as reasons their feebleness and destitution, the danger likely to accrue from the arrival of persons whose needs the govern-

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

ments will be forced sooner or later to relieve, and, above all, the endless numbers who would come for refuge from the Indian famines. But such limitations provoke no violent resentment in the breasts of these poor wretches. Incapable even on their native soil to rise in protest against unlawful treatment from their Mirasdars, they are still less capable of rebelling against restrictive measures enforced by distant governments. It is not from them that protests against Dominion legislation arise.

Such protests are voiced either by former emigrants – mainly traders, now almost totally excluded from the British Dominions, or, above all, from politicians and the intelligensia who have no personal concern in the question at all, but loudly demand the abolition of the restrictions in the name of Imperial liberty, national union, or racial equality.

Between those who demand the right of emigration and the greater number of those who would profit by it the ties are practically non-existent. The points of view are not the same; the men who insist upon the right do not discuss the question as an economic necessity, while those who have been driven by such necessity to leave their native lands are not thinking of demanding justice. Great masses of the peasants live under conditions of utter wretchedness, but the political problem rouses to fury only the select few. Their protest will only seriously perturb the Dominions when they have joined forces with the majority of candidates for emigration and when the mass of these unfortunate creatures will also be roused to take

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

an interest in the political aspect of the problem, and will desire to emigrate, not only so as to live, but also to improve their position overseas. It is easy to realize the international importance which the question would then assume, if we bear in mind its prevalence to-day in another Asiatic country, such as Japan; the serious nature of the problem in those islands, whose population, however, is only a sixth of India, is due to the indignation which stirs up the whole Japanese nation at the American emigration restrictions. Their effect upon the poor wretches who would have profited by such emigration, has been an upsetting of their lives, not merely an insult.

The overwhelming numbers of the peoples of India, the unparalleled wretchedness of the rural population may cause emigration to become a very serious question in international relationships. At the present time it is merely a problem which calls for careful attention. The very slight interest with which it is viewed by the general public, as in many other cases, is due to the character of the problem. It is too recent, as yet too limited in scope, to reflect the feelings of the Indian masses; the men who on platforms wrangle over the ills of India and those who suffer from these ills do not come from the same classes, nor do they view the problem in the same light. But emigration is one of those questions which extends the range of public interest, something concrete whereby the masses gradually arrive at an understanding of what the politician means when he talks of their grievances.

CONCLUSION

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Japanese, Chinese and Indian emigrants contrasted – Serious effects of anti-emigration laws – Racial hostility – The White man's predominance – Numbers actually a cause of weakness for Asia.

Is there a real danger for western nations and the future peace of the world in these hapless masses of Asia, cramped in the narrow confines of their tiny ricefields or on their little strips of land, swarming on the great highways or in city alleys, devastated in one place by famines, in others by robbery or wars, kept within their native lands by the bar of foreign countries?

Pent within the narrow limits of their homes, will these masses ever be able to break down the barriers that surround them and pour forth into other continents? Truth to tell, this yellow peril, as viewed by the people at large, is not an actual danger. Appalling visions of a sudden eruption of Asiatic peoples on to the white man's country have haunted the minds of the West since the days of Attila and Genghis Khan, but they seem to-day unlikely to be realised. Shiftings of whole populations are rare occurrences in history and even then have not come from distant lands. Asia is now the chief refuge for the Asiatics.

Of Japan, China and India, China is the only country from which vast streams of emigrants set

forth. The Chinese still retain that love of boldness and adventure, the ambition and spirit of initiative which, even in the most undisturbed eras of history, prepare the way for great migrations and enterprises. The influences of his own past and of the West combine to keep the Japanese in his own country, the former because they keep alive to-day what is left from the feudal times when Japan was shut off from foreign influences, the second because it multiplies his requirements and deters him from facing the trials of an emigrant's life. In India the reasons which would make exile a highly desirable fate increase the difficulties of its attainment; extreme poverty, destitution, ignorance, a sense of decay in all that surrounds them undermine even the men's energy and deliver them a helpless prey to the emigration agents, but check any voluntary effort on their part.

But the governments of Asia fully realize the advantages of an emigration which would free their rural districts from overwhelming masses and enrich them with money earned overseas. An active propaganda, as we have seen, is being carried on by Japanese officials, even in the smallest villages, to urge the peasants to emigrate. In its protests to Anglo-Saxon countries against emigration restrictions the Mikado's Government has not omitted to dilate upon the urgency of the problem. It points out the density of its population as a claim for admission to countries less populated. The diplomatist, it is true, is often more prudent. To lull any fearful anticipation in the minds of foreigners of a peaceful penetration, he

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

goes about in America, Australia, or Brazil, repeating that the emigration would always be very greatly restricted in numbers and is not a mere remedy for his country's internal difficulties. 'Japan does not consider emigration as a means of settling her difficulties of population,'* stated Marquis Komura, Minister of Foreign Affairs at Tokio in an article immediately broadcast. 'In discussions on the Empire's future the idea "Over-population leads to War" must be banished from the mind.' But the object of Japanese diplomacy is none the less to obtain the abolition, or at any rate some modification, of emigration restrictions. And when he professes the view that emigration is no solution, his intention is that emigration should begin again, when doubts have once been allayed.

Far from having lessened the gravity of the problem in Asia these restrictions have tended to make it a still more vital question. Instead of being, as previously, an important economic and social factor, the legislative acts of the western nations have made it a political question of supreme urgency. Asiatic countries have not always complained of exacting regulations simply because they actually desired to emigrate; it was the perception that these laws were unjust that has, sometimes very abruptly, shown the obvious urgency of emigration.

Of all unfriendly acts restriction on emigrants arouse among the people whom they affect the liveliest and most far-reaching sentiments. Any nation which should oppose another's territorial ambitions, exact

* *Japan Times*, February 11th, 1926.

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

protective duties on her merchandise, or compete with her for markets or raw material, would doubtless have to reckon with her hostility or hatred. But though these conflicts may sometimes injure the interest of the nationals concerned, they do not wound their self-esteem, except in so far as individuals are united and carry with them the whole-hearted sympathies of the nation. On the other hand, restriction of emigrants is an offence against every inhabitant of the country affected, an outrage. It proclaims, without any possibility of misunderstanding, a sentence of inferiority on all the members of a nation. After the voting at Washington of the law which barred his compatriots, a Japanese committed harikari in front of the American Embassy in Tokio. He was not only proclaiming the insult to his country; he was avenging his own personal honour after the fashion of the Samurais of old. In China protests against unfair treaties are the only common point of understanding among the Celestials. Even in countries where the pre-occupations of politicians are utterly ignored by the masses, as in India, the question of emigration is one which can contribute the most speedily to make them known. The sense of wounded pride, both with peoples and individuals, takes longest to forget. It may be that the barring of emigration will have consequences far more serious than emigration itself. Restriction of emigrants, even when their numbers were only slight, has given the peoples of Asia the feeling of being shut in within their own territories. His country seems smaller as soon as a

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

man is forbidden to leave it and the desire to go becomes more urgent. The feeling in the breasts of a whole nation that they are being pent in is perhaps more a source of danger than the narrow confines of the lands in which they dwell. Asia has an excuse to pour upon the West her troubles and difficulties.

Violence of racial hostility still further feeds the fires of Asiatic hatred. The thought of a contest with other nations is becoming an obsession. It must be admitted that these nations, too, are eager for the struggle and feelings on both sides are embittered by the consciousness of the enmity opposed to them. Each reproaches the other with the dread of foreigners. But at the bottom of this opposition is found, on both sides alike, the same feeling of the unknown, of fear.

Only those who have lived in the extra-territorial concessions during the revolutions and the civil wars, can understand the violence of these passions. In the villas of Shanghai or Peking the passing stranger hears from the lips of old residents speeches whose violence astounds him. Isolated within the concessions, separated from native villages by barbed wire, feeling around him the rumbling passions of masses of whom they know but little, the Whites do not check the unspeakable hatred rising within them. These whole nations which the white man, or at any rate his civilization, still dominates, have remained a mystery to him. Thus do the British colonists regard the fanatic masses of India, usually so passive, but ready to rise as one man to the heights of rapturous emotion or to sudden outbursts of anger and rebellion. Neither

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

can the European or American in China understand these masses of Celestials, roused to sudden change of feelings, of which he only perceives the outward forms, nor the Westerner at Tokio or Osaka these countenances devoid of expression, these enigmatic people, invariably courteous, of whom he only knows how they will conduct themselves and never what is in their minds. These thoughts of simmering fire that are ever present in the white man's mind when he is among the masses of Asia can be read unmistakably by anyone who looks into faces striving to show nothing of what their hearts are really feeling and whose actions are not dictated by such sentiments as he himself would feel; the very emotions shared by all, because they are expressed by different gestures, seem themselves to be different. Fear and restlessness are the inevitable results of this perpetual misinterpretation. A solidarity of race is formed among the different nations of the West. Residents are conscious of being not so much French, English, German, or American, as white. A white patriotism, a pride in being white, some mystic white power, stirs among these groups of exiles. In America, where men of colour are in the minority, the fear with which they inspire the Anglo-Saxon is by now intense. In Asia, where the minority, and a weak minority at that, is composed of Whites, the reaction is still stronger. Some mysterious movement, some sudden trembling has only to appear among the Chinese or Indian hordes, and feelings long checked burst out with a tremendous violence.

And dread of their white enemy stirs the masses

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

of the East even as the fear of the coloured man draws closely together the different elements in the western colonists. The Asiatic is haunted by the thought that not only does the white man despise him, but that his enmity will prove dangerous. The Westerner's instinct of self-preservation and the feeling that he must be on his defence – for it is often no more than this – he considers as a persistent aggressiveness. The mystery that shrouds men of other races alarms him as well. This civilization, which he has adopted without understanding it, this science of which he conjectures the effects, but only vaguely conceives its nature, all this knowledge, the possession of which makes the White powerful, seems to him to be dangerous secrets. The pale-face has come from his own country to enslave or destroy him. Rival interests and aspirations pit white men against coloured, man confronting man. But even more terrible is it to realize that he lies at the mercy of men who have come overseas and who are eager to destroy him. Here again we must quote Sun-Yat-Sen, the apostle of Asiatic nationalism, the theorist who has doubtless earned his amazing popularity because his speeches express the opinions most widely held among his people.

‘Even without touching upon the oppression from statesmen and financiers which we endure – merely reckoning the force of the survival of the most fit, it would be easy to foresee the end of the Chinese people. . . . The history of the Red Indians in North and South America affords us a striking proof of such a fate. Two or three centuries ago the whole American

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

continent was the land of native redskins; when the white man came, the Indian race was extinguished to the point of almost entirely disappearing. If we take into consideration political and economic forces, the extinction of a race may be still more rapid.' Gradually the idea is becoming firmly rooted in the mind of every Asiatic, that his own and his race's future are threatened, that the struggle with the white man is a struggle for life itself.

With the prolificity of her own men, resentment of the West is growing and becoming more widespread in Asia. In the hearts of the vast reserves of human beings confronting the white races is stored up an unfathomable hatred that grows daily more exasperated.

If wishes could be translated into action, the latent hostility felt towards the West throughout the East would threaten us with a terrible and imminent danger. But the Asiatic's resources are not as great as the violence of the passions which stirs them. The dangers which these hordes of coloured men would inflict upon the western world do not arise from their numbers or the sentiments which arouse them, but depend on the means at their disposal. Before she can become really dangerous, Asia has before her a long task to unite and organize.

In the first place, political and social divisions are a source of weakness among Asiatic peoples. Unless these are radically modified, they can never become a real peril to western powers. In India, both in the countryside and the towns, in public squares, parliamentary assemblies, corporations and universities,

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

Hindus and Moslems are utterly at variance on religious grounds. The quarrels which embitter men of different castes, though they may live in the same village, the same street or even in the same house, tend to become destructive forces in the whole nation. In China political struggles between extremist parties and quarrels on religion among the people at large, and of which the Western Powers take advantage, exhaust the very life-blood of the entire Republic.

But financial chaos, the total lack of administrative experience, the difficulty of successfully organizing any collective action even more than their quarrellings render the aspirations of the peoples of Asia impossible of fulfilment. The yellow race or the Indian is forced to seek the very weapons, armed with which they are so eager to rise against him, from the enemy himself. Not only do the systems of production, exchange or government come from the West – not only do the men who teach the Asiatics how to employ them – officials, engineers, officers, merchants, and traders, from England to India; the financial and military advisers, whose services China recently sought from Russia and seeks to-day from America or Germany; the technical advisers, thanks to whom the Japanese of the Meiji era worked out his code, universities, armies, fleet, public works, and industry – all these come from other countries. But the materials necessary for modern life, machinery, arms, motor cars, railways, flying machines, also come from overseas. It is even more satisfactory that the money required to purchase

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

them is usually raised on the money-markets of England and, above all, America. Even in Japan many of the factories, business houses and mines are American investments, as well as the great State Works, and, above all, the rebuilding of Tokio and Yokohama, enterprises only practicable through Wall Street capital. Let us suppose that Japan proposes to construct new railways in Manchuria, acquire some recent rights in Chinese textile industries, develop new mines at Hokkaido or Kiou-Siou, or increase the yield and power of her electric installations. She raises her State loans in the United States, contracting debts as debtor to creditor. American's hold on Asia is twofold; she lends the gold which goes to pay for a part of the material sold. As soon as there is any question of Japanese-American rivalry in the Pacific, Japan is seen, by a strange anomaly, to be living financially on loans from America. She is forced to sacrifice her political ambitions through being financially dependent. And if she fosters hostile intentions against America, she must appeal to that very country to realize them. All the nations of Asia, whatever western people may act as their advisers and financiers, are in exactly the same position. Even to-day their only means of fighting successfully against a white nation would be to appeal for counsel, plans of campaign, and, in Japan's case, for credit to another white nation.

Thus the perils of Asiatic aggressiveness against the western states are not so immediate as the simple-minded appear to consider. But time is working on the

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

side of Asia. Every day that passes may well be another stage on the road of the yellow nations or India towards civilization and the power which it confers. When the anarchy of Asia has once gathered together its mighty forces, who can foretell what the results will be for the white nations? Who can foresee the perils which a peace-loving world would have to endure from these hostile masses, so densely packed, which strive to break down the barriers which imprison them or at any rate fight those who have set them up around them?

But far from being a force that may be organized, does not overpopulation bring disorder in its train? Overwhelming numbers of destitute, unemployed and unskilled, are a source of exhaustion rather than strength for a country. Consciousness of their vast numbers may give the Asiatics the illusion of power, the feeling that he is stifled on his native soil may impel him westward. Yet their excessive population is actually a source of weakness, for it makes their consolidation more difficult and delivers them over more completely as a prey to anarchy.

There are disorders lurking in Japan under the outward show of changeless Imperial traditions, in India under the strict rule of the British, while outbursts and panics never cease to stir up the vast human masses of boundless China. The total of 400 millions which the Celestials are so proud to have reached, the 300 millions which the Indians reckon with such self-satisfaction, are not a sign of real strength. The fewer the numbers, the easier it is to organize; and immense population

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

does not necessarily increase the resources of a country, if it lessens the output of each inhabitant. If it were less densely populated and its wealth exploited more fully, China would undoubtedly have been more easily freed from civil wars and everlasting disturbances. Pirates, that great scourge of the Celestials, are rarely freebooters by profession. Simple peasants, starving in their villages and driven by hunger, set forth to rob the neighbouring villages, or some poor wretches come upon a gang already formed and follow it across whole provinces on profitable adventures. Piracy for them is only a search elsewhere for what is not to be found in their native village. The military problem, which despite the supposed restoration of peace is actually very critical, is also closely connected with that of over-population. Whenever the South is fighting the North and in every province rival factions are at each other's throats, peasants and coolies instantly join the army in crowds. To serve as a soldier means an assured livelihood; the army was a refuge from starvation and even if he got no pay, the soldier, like the pirate, could loot on his own behalf. Now that war is over the difficulty is to find work for the two millions under arms. To send them back to their villages would merely stir up, in the armies and country side, discontent and disorder. They have to be employed as soldiers, and so embarrass the country's finances with a military establishment on far too large a scale, and expose it perpetually to robbery. It is even necessary at times to keep the fires of disorder simmering, a policy which, while serving to gratify

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the aspirations of generals, necessitates the upkeep of this soldiery.

This army is to-day one of the great obstacles to the peace and reorganization of China. But over-population makes it practically inevitable. Instead of employing unemployed and unfortunates in public works and State undertakings, the Chinese Republic maintains them as soldiers. Thus it furnishes one part of its population with the means of supporting itself at the expense of the other part.

Now an utterly disorganized Asia, a prey to anarchy, is a danger to the peace of the world no less formidable than an Asia too powerful or too strong. The decay of the East may bring in its train as many international difficulties as its too rapid expansion. Instead of carrying the sword of conflict overseas, the enfeebled nations of Asia would make their own country the favoured seat of warfare. By their very weakness they would, as they have already done in the past, arouse the ambitions and rivalries of foreign powers.

Of late years Russian influence has grown considerably more prevalent owing to over-population in Asia. Anarchy in a country such as China made it an easier task to interfere with the governments, while the almost universal destitution proves a ready soil for Bolshevik ideals. Besides the political or racial discussions which have encouraged communistic propaganda in China, India and even Japan, the actions of the masses are a further cause of its rapid expansion. In the over-crowded valleys of Kouang-Tong and Kouang-Si, syndicates of peasants were formed under

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

the influence of Moscow with an amazing speed. On the tiny ricefields of Western Japan, agrarian disorders spread as quickly as strikes in the town. In India chronic destitution and underfeeding have reduced the exhausted masses to the eager expectancy of revelations and miracles. Among the middle classes young students out of work grow discontented and disorderly in every land of Asia.

Are we to envisage an Asia pouring forth her hordes on other countries or as a continent undermined by international troubles, wasting her own efforts and provoking the rival ambitions of the western powers to her own undoing? The two possibilities are not necessarily self-opposed. The danger of over-population is that it creates at once this irresistible impulse and disquieting weakness – that it justifies the aspirations of the masses of Asia, yet raises up against them the ambitions of the western powers. The peoples of Asia must of necessity expand, even though they are often not strong enough to defend their own native land, so complicated is their position. All the people are thus reduced to spread at the expense of any other people weaker than themselves and these are to be found in Asia. Expansion is sometimes prompted by reasons of state, sometimes perpetrated by humane methods and almost always due to economic causes. The Chinese grow wealthy at the expense of the Malayans, Annamites and the Islanders of Oceania. Impelled by a fatal passion for the welfare of her nationals, Japanese daily tighten their hold on China. The impulse of forces pent up in narrow surroundings

ASIA'S TEEMING MILLIONS

is not yet directed against the distant and powerful West, but turns merely to the lands of least resistance, Asia within Asia. And it is there that conflicts may well break out. But it will be long before the Asiatics can transfer them overseas.

The ideal of Asiatic brotherhood is slowly progressing. Thanks to lessons learnt from the West, a struggle against their teachers becomes a prospect more and more likely to be realized. Perhaps anarchy in Asia will not always insure Europe and America against the hatreds which they have aroused. What force, then, will be able to restrain the masses of the East and prevent them from seeking outside their own Continent the resources which they must possess if they are to live?

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